

Strangled

70p

'ELLO 'ELLO 'ELLO....
WOT'S ALL THIS
EAR THEN?...

AURAL
SCULPTURE

Hugh talks to Adam of U2
Paul Nieman — Aural Sculptor
Agog on The Tyne
The world must prepare itself
To herald the advent of Aural Sculpture
Dave's Aural Quest

strangled

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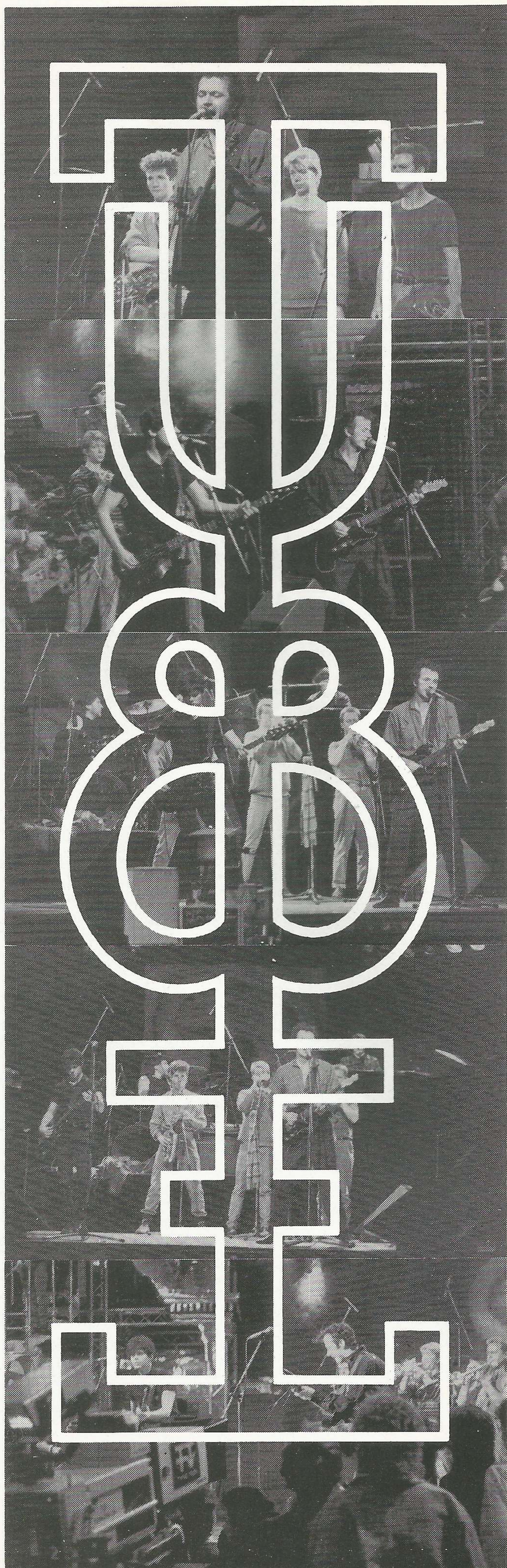
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EDITORIAL

● Tour News

As I'm sure you are well aware by now, The Strangers are embarking on a major UK tour this month, followed by a European tour commencing in Stockholm on 18 March. Apologies to all those of you who, having received our exclusive advance notice of tour

dates, planned to go to the gigs in Bournemouth, Brighton and Shepton Mallet, only to find the dates changed shortly afterwards. Here is the revised list of UK tour dates, along with the European dates available so far.

UK DATES

● February 1985

11	OXFORD	Apollo
12	NOTTINGHAM	Royal Concert Hall
13	SHEFFIELD	City Hall
15	GLASGOW	Apollo
16	ABERDEEN	Capitol
17	EDINBURGH	Playhouse
18	NEWCASTLE	City Hall
20	LIVERPOOL	Royal Court Theatre
21	MANCHESTER	Apollo
22	BIRMINGHAM	Odeon
23	BIRMINGHAM	Odeon
25	LONDON	Dominion SOLD OUT
26	LONDON	Dominion SOLD OUT
27	LONDON	Dominion
28	LONDON	Dominion

● March 1985

2	SHEPTON MALLET	Showering Pavilion
3	BOURNEMOUTH	International Centre
4	BRIGHTON	Conference Centre

● EUROPEAN DATES

March 1985

18	STOCKHOLM	Draken
19	GOTHENBURG	University
20	COPENHAGEN	Saga Theatre
22	HANNOVER	Rotation
23	UTRECHT	Music Hall
24	HAMBURG	University
25	COLOGNE	Stadthalle Mühlheim
26	BELGIUM	
27	BELGIUM	
28	LILLE	Foire Internationale
29	NANCY	Parc des Expositions
31	BOURGES	Bourges Festival

● April 1985

1	MANNHEIM	Feuer Wache
2	FRANKFURT	Volksbulingsheim
3	BERLIN	Metropol
4	NUREMBERG	Stadthalle
6	VIENNA	Arena
8	ITALY	
9	ITALY	
10	ITALY	
11	ITALY	
12	ITALY	
14	ZURICH	Volkhaus
15	GENEVA	Salle des Fêtes
17	STRASBOURG	Hall Tivoli
18	LYONS	Espace Tony Garnier
19	MARSEILLES	Stadium St. Just
20	NICE	Théâtre Verdure
22	MONTPELLIER	Palais des Sports
23	TOULOUSE	Palais des Sports
24	CLERMONT FERRAND	Maison des Sports

- 25 BORDEAUX
- 26 NANTES
- 27 BREST
- 28 ORLEANS
- 29 PARIS
- 30 CAEN

Patinoire Meriadeck
Parc de la Beaujoire
Parc Penfeld

Le Zénith
Parc des Expositions

Tickets for the UK tour are on sale at each venue, except Shepton Mallet where local record shops will be selling tickets; for details of tickets for this venue contact — Concert Travel Club, 21 High Street, Barnstaple, N. Devon. Tel: (0271) 74447 — ask for Steve. Ticket prices are £5 and £4 everywhere, except Shepton

Mallet where they are £5 only. Prices at the London Dominion Theatre are £6 and £5.

At the time of going to print we hear there may be a possibility of further UK dates. If you want details of these, or further details of the European tour, please write and send us an SAE.

● International News

Despite the somewhat disappointing performance of **Aural Sculpture** here in the UK, it would seem as though things are beginning to happen for The Strangers on the international front, and over the past two months the band have been spending some time abroad. JJ has been doing some promotion work in Norway, where **Aural Sculpture**, although now on its way down, is still in the top fifty albums. In Italy, it would appear that **Skin Deep** is at Number Ten in the singles charts and is still rising. The band have also spent a considerable amount of time in Germany recently, making five television appearance in the space of only two weeks. Markus Glaubit of Berlin informed us that **Aural Sculpture** was LP of the month in the November issue of the German music magazine "Music Express" and the album is currently at Number 47 and still rising in the German charts.

● Whingers

Some people have written to complain that we do not give subscribers sufficient information about what the band are doing and that we did not give them advance warning of tour dates. In STRANGLED 19 we asked all people interested in tour dates to write in and send an SAE. Tour dates were sent out to these people on 10 December, enabling readers to buy their tickets before the dates had even been given to the music press. How's that for

service? As for all other information, we simply do not have the time or money at SIS to inform subscribers of all the band's activities. Those who are really keen to know everything that is happening, can always write and ask (sending an SAE please!) and will normally receive a fairly prompt reply.

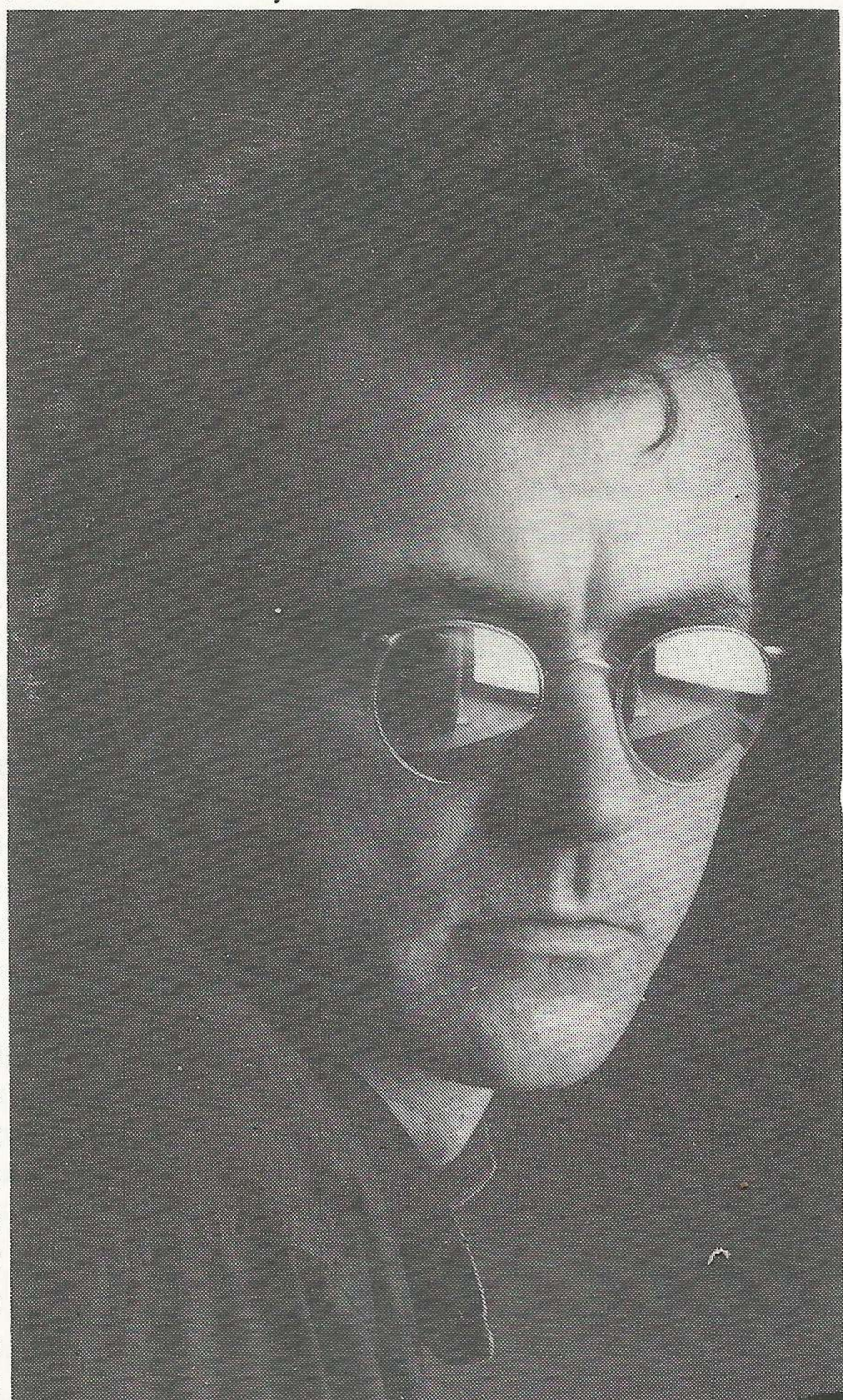
● Overseas Postal Charges

Calling all overseas readers. The postage and packing charges for merchandise bought from us at SIS are calculated according to the average small order. However, in the case of orders sent by surface mail to Europe or by air mail to any country, great savings can be made on large orders where several items can be sent in one parcel. (Posters, for example, are sent in long tubes and must, therefore, be sent separately). So, if you wish to place an order for several items, totalling £15 or more, please write to us first and we can give you an individual quotation for postage and packing/insurance charges. You could save yourself a lot of money!

● Is a Diamond Jet's best friend?

Many of you have written to us to report the apparent similarity between our own Jet Black and the guitarist accompanying Jim Diamond on his recent "Top of the Pops" performances. I can assure you that Jet has never played guitar for Mr. Diamond. You-you-you should have known better!

Photo: Joe Gaffney



HUGH CORNWELL TALKS TO ADAM OF

U2



Left to Right: Adam, Bono, The Edge, Larry Mullen Jr.

HUGH *It's being said everywhere I go that U2 are due to become the biggest band in the world by the end of 1984. That's quite a thing to say about you. How do you react to that? I mean, every time I see you, you're always working — you never seem to have any time off. But then I only ever see you when you're working because you live in Ireland and I don't go to Ireland that much. How do you react to something like that when you read it in the paper?*

"You don't form a band unless you believe you're going to be bigger than The Beatles,"

ADAM Ultimately we have to believe it, otherwise we wouldn't do it. I'm sure it's the old, old story and in many ways people try and keep it a secret. You don't form a band unless you think or believe you're actually going to be bigger than The Beatles because that's the motivation, the standard almost. When we formed in 1974/75 when we were just a school band....

HUGH 1974? Really?

ADAM Yes, I was 16 at the time. Larry and Edge were 14 and Bono was 16 as well.

HUGH *So you've been going for 10 years as well. People have been turning round to us and saying, "The Stranglers have been going for 10 years. That's a landmark." Yet U2 have done that as well.*

ADAM Well, not U2 exactly. When you're a school band there's this very important phase, a stepping stone, when you, as a group, say, "We're going to turn professional."

HUGH When was that?

ADAM 1976. The band had been formed under different names. We were called Feedback at first. The same line-up with the addition of the Edge's brother who subsequently left when we became U2 and played guitar for the Virgin Prunes. The thing about Edge and his brother was that they were both — lunatics is too glamorous — misfits, in the sense that they didn't have many friends. They were very intelligent but different and if you didn't know them you thought they were just boring people. Edge's brother is a computer expert, an engineering fruitcake, who got into computers. He got a Foundation Scholarship for Trinity College in Dublin, so not only did they pay for him to go to college but they gave him a wage as well.

HUGH Was he an older brother?

ADAM Yes, by two years I think. He was a kind of engineering prodigy. But because he was so nutty he didn't really fit in with the ambition and drive of the band, which is why he was perfect for the Prunes. But Edge and he were very close.

HUGH So he was in at the beginning?

ADAM In a way because — this sounds like an excuse and it's not really fair — Edge and he were very close, you know, they bought an electric guitar between them, shared equipment, so it was all sort of very incestuous. So, first we were Feedback with him in the band, then the direction changed and we became The Hype with him still in the band. We changed to The Hype around the time we left school, doing the usual low-key social functions. We were doing a couple of Stones' numbers in fact — **Brown Sugar** and **Jumping Jack Flash**. Edge played the intro to **Jumping Jack Flash** and Dick, his brother, played the intro to **Brown Sugar**. **Jumping Jack Flash** came first in the

set we were playing and whenever Bono said, "Right, we're doing a Stones' number, **Jumping Jack Flash**," Dick would go, "Ah Stones' number and start playing **Brown Sugar**."

HUGH *So Edge's brother went to join another band and you changed the name of the band?*

ADAM Yes, the "farewell gig" was very bizarre. The first half of the show was The Hype with The Hype set and then, after 20 minutes, Dick left the stage and we became U2.

HUGH *What did he do while you were playing?*

ADAM We were doing a gig with the Prunes so he played with them.

HUGH *Are the Virgin Prunes an Irish band?*

ADAM Yes, they're signed to Rough Trade.

HUGH *So you got a few gigs through them and toured with them?*

ADAM No. In a funny way we were forerunners of them and they really grew from us. When a band starts there's always a group of 15 or so friends who go to all the gigs and they were those people. Amongst the circle there had always been this joke — "We're in a band, we're called the Virgin Prunes." When U2 began to be something, pulling 30 or 50 people at a show, they suddenly felt redundant and we felt embarrassed and told them, "Fuck it. Get your band together." And that's what happened. When we were headlining they were always the support band. They were a performance art rock group and in many ways influenced us in our early shows.

HUGH *Did they ever make any records?*

ADAM Yeah, an album called *If I die, I die*, on Rough Trade. You should get it.



Photo: Anton Corbijn

HUGH *How did they influence you?*

ADAM Well, because we were a kind of "careerist" band and they weren't, it was funny to observe them in this kind of ramshackle state — not caring whether they had a roadie to tune their guitars. In retrospect they were probably painful to sit through but they were just into getting up there and vibing the audience and threatening them. They influenced us in that, I suppose, they liberated us. They influenced us through the visual image. After all, the only bands who would come and play in Dublin were the ones who could afford to lose money. So we tended to see the glossy side of what was happening musically and I suppose that was our conception of where international music was until punk came along and turned it all on its head. That was incredibly exciting. Great fun!

HUGH *But you were lucky in that you never got drawn into that. You were able to develop on the sidelines.*

"We were very keen to be a punk band because it seemed to be the only way of getting out of Dublin."

ADAM Well we were very keen to be a punk band because, at the time, it seemed to be the only way of getting out of Dublin. The vibe about punk was that it was exciting, it was young — you didn't have to know what you were doing. You just went for it with enough neck. First there were the Radiators from Space, then the Rats and there was all this talk about massive amounts of money in the deals. In terms of the local community that was the way to get talked about. So we went through the punk phase and were very bad at it; I suppose essentially because, at the end of the day, we were a middle class band and we can't hide that. We would make plans about where we were going to go with the band, like when we were going through our Police phase. Then the Police got signed up and we thought, "Shit! We can't do that."

HUGH *What do you mean, your Police phase?*

ADAM In the way that if you're listening to records and reading the press you can work out roughly where things are going and what journalists and record companies are looking for. We became a sort of Police type band, that kind of minimalist type of pop. Then they were signed up and had a hit with **Roxanne** so we had to rethink.

HUGH *What other bands did you take notice of, apart from the Police?*

ADAM No, we didn't actually know of the Police until they were signed up. It was just that we had the same stream of consciousness as artists, an awareness of the direction we should be going in. Like when we got signed it was the time of Echo and The Bunnymen, Teardrop Explodes — the psychedelic revival. Coming up with the same ideas at the same time, but not necessarily aware of the others. So, after the Police were signed we had to rethink. At that point Bono was developing as a singer...

HUGH *You mean you were doing white reggae stuff?*

ADAM No, minimal in the sense that the guitar was very underplayed, it was very much a rhythm instrument, the bass and drums carried most of the melody and Bono sang on top. They were very simple song structures, poppy if you like.

HUGH *Then where did you go from there?*

ADAM Well, in the Pretenders vein. In fact,

to be very honest, in those early days The Stranglers were much more of an influence than The Clash or The Pistols. The Clash were so much of an English working class movement we didn't feel part of — the dole, Notting Hill Gate and all that whole environment.

HUGH *But didn't you think that was all sort of engineered? I mean, how can art students be working class?*

"In those early days The Stranglers were much more of an influence than The Clash or The Pistols."

ADAM I think we were romantic about it and I don't think we believed it. But we were so young we didn't actually know enough ourselves to be able to say that.

HUGH *So bands like that, when they were signed, you recognised that that was what you were doing. So you changed tack. What were you doing to find out about these bands? Reading the music press?*

ADAM We'd been going since 74/75 doing our own thing. Suddenly in 76 a movement came along that we could align ourselves to. The first records available were The Clash, The Pistols and The Stranglers. The Stranglers had been in the dubious position of actually being on the Old Grey Whistle Test. So 76 suddenly gave us an idea of where we could be going as a young, energetic, teenage band.

days and tell you, "God, you remind me of ..." as we had?

ADAM Well, I remember one guy telling us, "Look lads, a bit of advice. If you're going to play other people's songs, for fuck's sake play them well." So then we said, "Fuck this. We're not playing other people's songs. Let's write our own."

HUGH *So you hadn't been writing before that? What were you playing then?*

ADAM Really awful pop songs in our own way. Then there was the influence of punk in 76. Well, The Clash was really alien to us, but The Pistols were something really exciting because of that big guitar thing. It wasn't something we felt any credibility towards but The Stranglers were something that was musical, aggressive, sexy and relevant and that was very much something that motivated us an awful lot. At that time **Rattus** as a record was just incredible. It wasn't thin or shallow or bullshit. It was a serious record that had social statement. It was incredibly tough yet musical. So, those were the three primary influences in terms of energy and we decided we had to move away from all that. Then there was the Police thing, the politics of the way they wrote. Then they got signed and we shifted tack to a Pretenders type way — we're talking 3-pieces. Then they got signed and we had to move again. In a way the discovery of the echo box....

HUGH *What's an echo box?*

ADAM Well, in sophisticated circles, like bands that play Wembley, stage equipment is very sophisticated. You have these echo units on instruments that are programmable and fit into nice furniture on stage. They use them in the studio too. We first heard of them when Townshend used them in The Who and we were a 3-piece into power and guitar. In that way The Who was an influence in terms of our punk sensibility. We thought, "Right. No one else is doing this, we can do it. So we bought a cheap echo unit for £150 which was a lot of money — we had to go without food for a couple of days. Edge became an expert on using cheap echo units. We used it on guitar and

used a Roland space echo for the voice because Lillywhite's an echo lunatic. Then we used them live. Edge used those cheap machines for a couple of years.

HUGH *Did you work with Steve Lillywhite before you recorded with him?*

ADAM No. Our first producer was Martin Hammett who did the first two Joy Division records and the New Order. I'm not sure what he's doing now.

HUGH *Did you do any demo tapes?*

ADAM Yeah.

HUGH *They must have got you a recording contract.*

ADAM Well, I remember one night Larry, the drummer, came and said, "Have you seen the evening paper?" and there was a competition for the best pop band with a prize of £5000 and a recording deal. He said we should enter and see what happened. I said OK and applied and sent off all the bullshit. This was when I was 17 and he was 15. Then we got the forms back, the date was arranged and we had to get the train to Limerick. We had a show the night before in the Project Arts Centre. It was St. Patrick's Day and it was a late night gig. So we didn't get off till 3 am. We got four hours' kip and had to get off to get the train. We arrived there and had to do kind of heats. We got through the first one and Bono's voice was completely sharp from the night before. So he said, "Sorry, I've got laryngitis and my voice is a bit rough but the songs are good," and we played three songs. We got to the final which was in front of an audience, not just judges. We did our set, then sat and watched the other bands. They were all show bands, doing other people's songs. Really impressive — the sort we wanted to be like. We thought, "We don't stand a hope." The results were announced in reverse order and sure enough one of the show bands, a band who sang in Irish, came second — and we actually won it! To this very day I can't really figure it out.

HUGH *Perhaps because you were playing your own stuff?*

"We got promised this contract by CBS Records and it was a bullshit contract."

ADAM No, I think at the end of the day it's because there's a spirit in the band that comes across. I don't really know what it is. I don't think it's Bono, I think it's the band — the combination of the four of us. We got promised this contract by CBS Records and it was a bullshit contract.

HUGH *Did you hear that, CBS?*

ADAM We were naive and young but we still weren't prepared to take it. The guy from CBS was well-meaning. But the problem with CBS in Ireland is that they're there as a marketing corporation, not to sign new bands. This guy had a bit of flair and he wanted to sign bands, Irish bands. The rest of the companies weren't interested but he offered the best he could. He actually talked CBS into paying for our first demo tape. It was our first time in the studio and I think his first time as a producer. He told us to set up as we would do for a live show and play the set. It was all done on 2-track. He thought that was a good way to do a demo. Then he took the tapes off to London to try and talk them into signing us and they just laughed.

HUGH *Did you get a chance to hear them beforehand?*

ADAM Yeah, they were awful. We didn't know at the time, we had nothing to com-

pare with. We thought that was the way punk bands got signed. We were giggling and saying, "Yeah, next week millionaires" — and it didn't happen. So then an English A & R guy from CBS came to check us out. He was fairly interested and said they'd pay for a proper demo. He produced it. He wasn't particularly hot as a producer then. And CBS turned it down. Then we said, "You've paid for the tapes. We need to put a single out in Ireland. Can we use the tapes? That's what we did. We put out an EP called **U2 3** which was three songs from that session, **Boy/Girl**, **Stories For Boys** and **Out of Control**.

HUGH *Did you use those later?*

ADAM Yes, we put **Stories For Boys** and **Out of Control** on the first album **Boy**. But they were re-recorded with Steve Lillywhite. The EP was a bit crude but at the time it was the biggest local Irish single to be released. There wasn't much of a domestic market. Most of the other singles around were traditional Irish singles or show band singles. We were actually a young punk band and we had a single that did extremely well. We then tried to follow that up with other demos we'd done for CBS which then flopped and we didn't know where to go. Every record company turned us down. We'd done a small London club tour, the Hope and Anchor and all that, to try and get signed and nothing happened. So we then went back to Ireland and decided that we either had to break up or do a massive tour and we did a tour.

ANDY I left just before the tour but I remember it being set up because when they came back from England the tour had cost £3000 — £4000, doing all these pubs and clubs in December 1979. There were one or two very good shows but most were terrible, which put most companies off when they came again the second night. They went back to Ireland heavily in debt having blown their credibility a bit.

HUGH *But after a lot of trials and tribulations you got signed to Island and people know your records from that point. Now, Larry, your drummer, is a bit of a phenomenon. He's only twenty-two and he's been with you since the beginning.*

ADAM Well, he's the guy who formed the band! When he was 14 he'd been drumming in a boy's brigade thing. He decided he was interested in drumming and his parents bought him a baby drum kit. He was pretty good and he put a notice up in school for anyone interested in forming a band.

HUGH *So you were all at the same school?*

ADAM Yeah, at that stage.

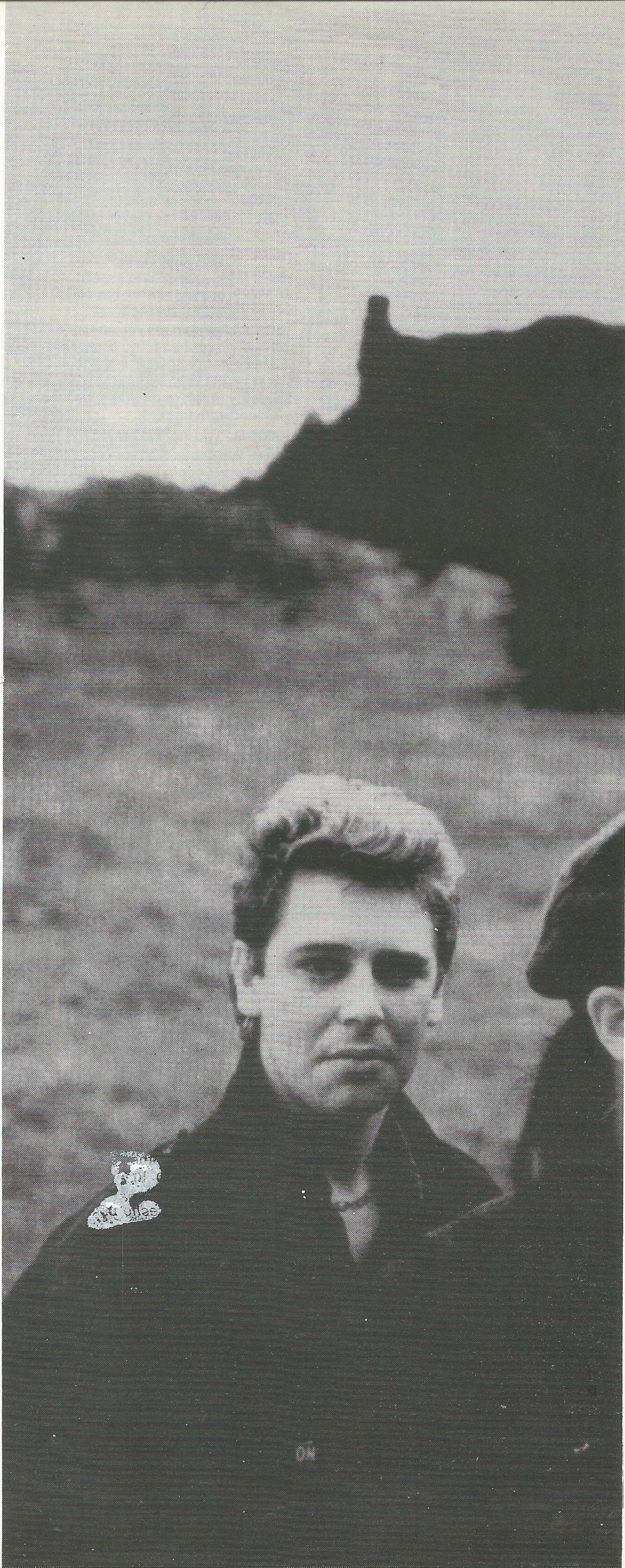
HUGH *Someone told me the other day that U2 have done everything right. Everything that has happened to U2 has been the right thing at the right time. Which is why you're in the position you're in now.*

ADAM Well, we've made a lot of mistakes that have been to our advantage in the long run. For instance, our second album, **October**, absolutely turkeyed. There were two major reasons. Firstly in Britain and Europe it was the first record that actually came clean about the Christian bias in the band and dealt with it.

HUGH *What Christian bias?*

"Our second album, October, absolutely turkeyed."

ADAM The other three guys are vehement Christians in terms of Christianity and bibles and all that type of stuff. That was the first time anyone was able to suss anything about us and it's very explicit on the **October** album. I actually don't think it's anything worth worrying about. So that



record basically got bad reviews in Britain and Europe.

HUGH How did it show that — in the lyrics?

ADAM Yeah, it's a lyrical thing.

HUGH So it was Bono's doing because he does the lyrics. I mean, you can't listen to someone's guitar and say he's playing the guitar really Christianly.

ADAM No, it's certainly a lyrical thing.

HUGH So it was Bono's doing?

ADAM Yeah, but the rest of the band were behind him, they didn't stop him. I mean, on the **October** album there are lines like "Oh Lord, if I could.... I'd give it to you," in **Gloria**.

ANDY Also, when it became obvious that that was religious, you could see it in some of the earlier songs like **I Will Follow**.

HUGH And you think that's why the album failed?

ADAM Yeah, but coupled with the fact that in the States for instance the Island deal with Warner Brothers was near the end of their contract and they weren't going to spend money promoting it, it wasn't worth their while. In a funny way that was what could be construed as a bad move but in retrospect it was a great move because **October** is one of the strongest records we've ever made. It's a great record.

HUGH Speaking as an outsider I would say that the fact that your deal was going to be up would seem more of a reason why they didn't get behind it, rather than the Christian thing. One other thing that really intrigues me, looking at the album that you've so graciously given me, is that it says, "Thanks to Tim Buckley" on it. He was a very weird folk singer of sorts, right.... (laughter).... You didn't know about that? I just wondered why you'd got a credit to Tim Buckley? Is that one of Bono's ...?

ADAM No. This is drunkenness. Tim Buckley comes under "U2 crew" — he's a member of our crew.

HUGH So it's not *the* Tim Buckley?

ADAM You stand corrected. What might be interesting is that it says "Special thanks to Miss Christine Care or Mrs Christine Care", who was formerly Chrissie Hynde.

HUGH Why's that there then?

ADAM Because the Pretenders played a show in Dublin in the middle of the record recording and she actually came in and sang on **Pride**, on the backing vocals. To be honest, I can't hear her there.

HUGH So she gets special thanks.

ADAM Well, I think she's great. And Simple Minds are wonderful. I'm delighted the two of them got married.

HUGH I think perhaps you should relate the story of why U2 and The Stranglers had a strange relationship at one stage.

ADAM I hate recounting this story and it's obviously unfair to hit you with it because you don't remember it.

HUGH Do you remember it?

ADAM Well, our sort of first big gig in Ireland was opening with The Stranglers at the Top Hat. In fact, I tell a lie; we were actually promised a Stranglers' gig earlier in the year when The Stranglers didn't turn up.

HUGH For a gig in Ireland?

ADAM Yes. You cancelled a show and the Vipers, a serious punk band, played.

HUGH So you supported?

ADAM No. The Radio Stars, who were with you on that tour, showed up and so did the Vipers, but you didn't.

HUGH So you didn't do the gig, so that pissed you off for a start?

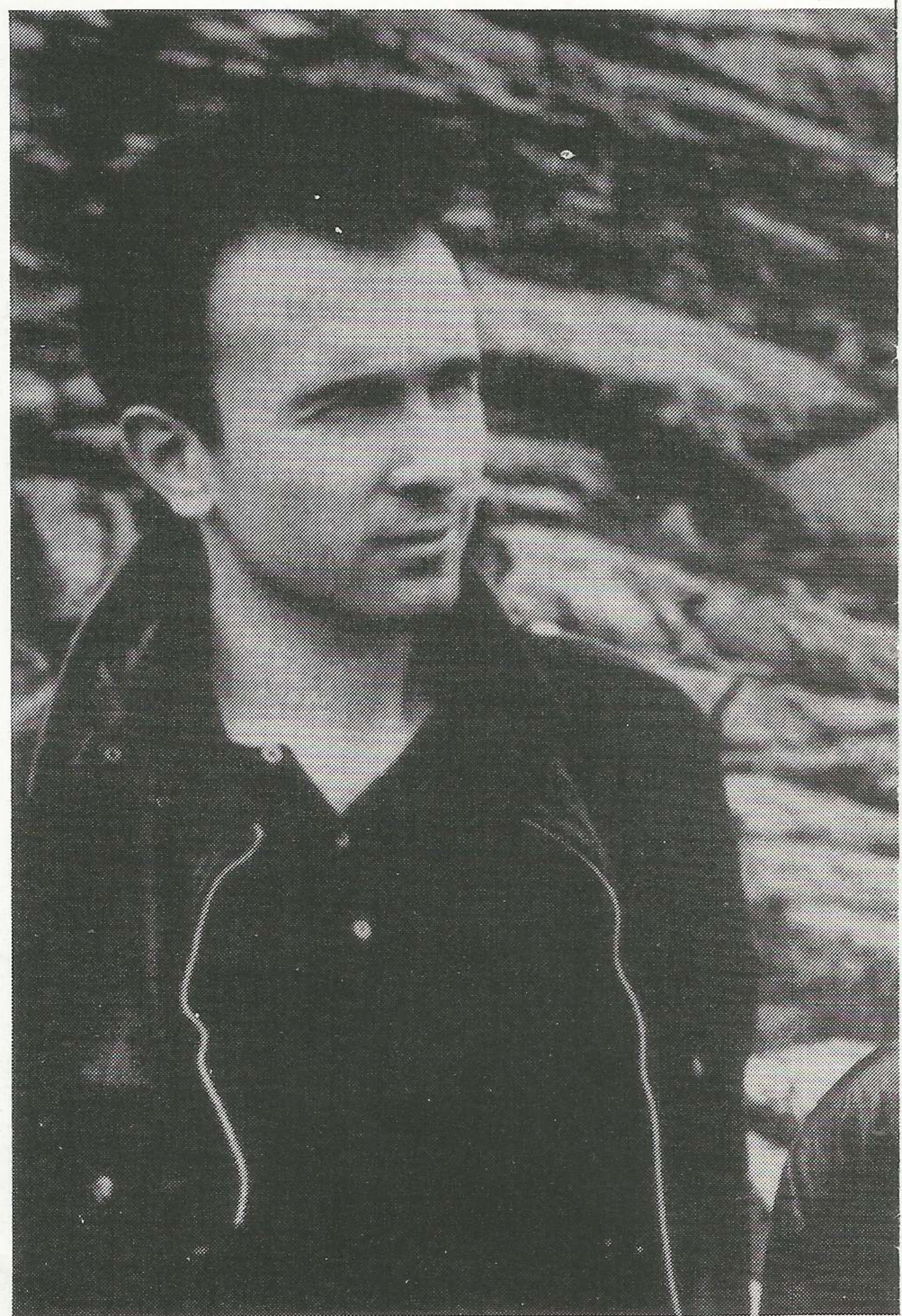
ADAM Yeah, and we were pretty pissed off that The Stranglers didn't show up. Eventually The Stranglers came back — I think it was the **No More Heroes** tour, and you played a venue in Dublin called the Top Hat and we were the opening act, so it was a big vibe. Paul, our manager, was away on

holiday and we had a journalist with us called Bill Graham, an old friend of Paul, as journalist and helper. And you had this Irish lighting guy, Mulligan. He was a guy we could get to try and pull any strings we

"Bono marched up to JJ and said, 'What's all this 'No more Heroes' bullshit? Do you know what we've just gone through?'"

could. He obviously felt kind of responsible for these Paddies who were opening. So he was going to make sure the lighting and sound were fine. In fact he was very nice but didn't make it any easier. The Stranglers were late and did a long soundcheck and we were shitting bricks because it was our first big gig and we didn't have a soundcheck. Then we heard there wasn't a dressing room for us. What happened at this particular venue was that the support band didn't get to look at a dressing room. Our dressing room was behind the PA. It was our first real support gig, so we said "Fair enough". But after all that, having been treated in this way, we hit the stage and the Edge broke a string during the first number. If you break a string on a bolted neck guitar the whole thing goes out of tune very quickly. We had no roadies and he never recovered — in fact he broke another string later. So we had a lousy gig. We were so green behind the ears we didn't know anything about monitors etc. Then we came off, with no dressing room, which is even worse when you want to hide. I missed the particular discussion but Bono was in fact so furious that he marched into your dressing room and walked up to John and said, "What's all this 'No More Heroes' bullshit? Do you know what we've just gone through and do you give a fuck?" He and John got into a row which became a philosophical discussion. According to Bono, you

U2



wandered up and put in your sixpennyworth and at the end of that Bono was completely humiliated. Probably because both you and John are quite tall. He left your dressing room and actually discovered on the way out that the room next to your dressing room, the hospitality room, was full of booze.

HUGH *And could have been used as your dressing room?*

ADAM Yeah. And Bono, who wasn't a drinker at all, felt extremely chuffed when he pinched a bottle of wine from that room. When we got out of that building we drank it before we got into the bus home.

HUGH *When we were gigging in those days, we didn't know what was happening because so much had happened in a short space of time. You do a gig and you're just happy you've got a room to sit in and you don't even think about the support band.*

ADAM Yeah, I understand. You need as much time as possible to make you feel confident.

HUGH *It was a very short period for us though.*

ADAM Well, I thought it was a great show — because I actually stayed for it. Even though I was prejudiced I had to admit it was very good.

HUGH *That's a funny story.*

ADAM Well, we all have skeletons in our cupboards, I'm sure.

HUGH *But do you get any time off? I was talking to your manager, Paul Mc Guinness. Has he been your manager from the start?*

ADAM Since about 76.

HUGH *I was talking to him earlier and he said you're going to be on tour for the next 8 months or something crazy.*

ADAM We spend a lot of time working, on the road. I think the great thing is that we're young. It's not that complicated. I can foresee that, in the next couple of years, we would like to change the amount of time we

spend working, i.e. on the road. Out of respect for ourselves and our relationships, rather than the music. I mean, we are not where we are because we're shallow enough to believe that we're great or the music is all important. We are where we are because we've worked hard and we have moral values that we fight hard to retain. One of these values may be more time off in the future and I don't think it will be a bad thing. Pompously, I think it's an important band and we can trust ourselves to define our own schedule at this point.

HUGH *Have you ever got the impression that you're being pushed somewhere by business interests? Maybe where you don't want to go at this precise moment?*

ADAM No. We've always kept on top of everything we've done with 100% commitment. We're extremely well informed of what we're doing.

HUGH *That's commendable. A lot of bands can't say that.*

ADAM We've definitely never been hoodwinked. Every decision we've made has been very much our own. That's the advantage of living in Dublin in many ways. I'd hate to live in London. In the early days all I wanted to do was move to London, but you get a great perspective living in Dublin and it's great to have a distance from it. You're very much the same where you live.

HUGH *What's the longest time you've spent in London?*

ADAM Probably about a week. The thing about London is that it attracts everyone who's in a band for a couple of weeks. They move to London, the band breaks up then somebody else with a good idea is forming a band so you get into that. It's all short-term — it's all desperate people. London does not create music. It's the centre of the music business but the people who hang around London are part of a different scene, not part of what we're into.

HUGH *So it's the business rather than the*

artist maybe?

ADAM Well, if any of us were ageing musicians and we wanted to make it, we'd move to London with a band and ultimately the band would break up because it's a shallow idea. But you're meeting lots of other musicians who are desperate and they have a scheme to make money and be successful. So you get involved in all these little schemes and you become more cynical, more hard-nosed, less artistic. You become a great player and get into the whole session routine saying, "Yeah, I know it's a scheme, I know it's a sham, but I'm getting good money and I'll keep doing it." That's not where we're at. We actually believe in music and the power of music and try to perpetuate it in our own lives and protect that naivety.

HUGH *So what is it that you haven't done so far that you want to do? That's a broad question.*

ADAM Well, you have singers like Frank Sinatra and Van Morrison, people who do a show, make a record and, musically, it's a spiritual experience. It does something. My own ultimate ambition is for U2, as a band, to be thought of in that way. I think we can do it. I don't think there are any rules, we can make those ourselves. The reason I think it will happen is because, in a very boring way, we are unlike the majority of bands in that we're very level-headed and conscientious. Most bands fuck up and break up because of drugs, rows about money or whatever. I think that the strength of our relationship as individuals is that we'll always have that responsibility for the music and, as we mature as people, individuals and performers, that spirituality, that transcendental state will become more and more focused and maybe we could still be playing gigs when we're 50 or 60. Not gigs like last night at Wembley, but a growth as a band, that's relevant and legitimate as 60-year-old men playing music.



Photo: Anton Corbijn

PAUL NIEMAN—



Photo: Hartmut Hering

Left to Right: Steve Lodder, Steve Waterman, Kevin Dunford, Tim Whitehead, Marc Parnell, Paul Nieman

AURAL SCULPTOR

An Interview with Chris Twomey

"The musicians of our times are harlots and charlatans who use science without being scientists and abuse art without being artists."

Aural Sculpture Jan '83

It is surely a generally acknowledged fact that, in today's music business, an absence of any real musical ability need never prevent the aspiring pop star from achieving great commercial

success. Indeed, in some cases a complete lack of talent would seem to be a positive asset. For proof of that it is unnecessary to look further than Telly Savalas. He doesn't really

pretend to be able to sing in the accepted sense of the word. And he didn't even bother to try when he decided to cash in on his popularity as Kojak by making a record in 1975 — he simply talked his way to the top of the charts with *If*.

Neither is it at all uncommon for a group to rocket to stardom on the strength of records that are far from being all their own work. Lead vocals, for various reasons, are rarely

ghosted — although even this has been done. But experienced session musicians are frequently brought in to execute the instrumental “twiddly bits”. And quite often they record the entire backing.

It was one of The Bay City Rollers, asked to comment on the revelation that the group had been helped out in this way on their early records, who admitted that he had actually pleaded with the group’s record producers: “Next time we go into the studio to record a hit record can I be there please!”

It is one of the many ironies of the pop business that praise doesn't always go to the most deserving.

So what then of the professional session musicians, many of whom remain anonymous, even though some are the hidden musical adeptness behind several hit records? It is one of the many ironies of the pop business that praise doesn’t always go to the most deserving. The case of Tony Burrows, a top session singer of the late 60’s and 70’s, highlights this.

Although Burrows has been the unidentified singer on at least a dozen Top Twenty hits and reckons to have helped sell over 5,000,000 records in this way, every one of the ten or so discs he has put out under his own name has flopped. He once found himself appearing anonymously no less than three times on a single edition of “Top of the Pops”. This came about because three of the studio groups with whom he was lead singer — Edison Lighthouse, White Plains and Brotherhood of Man — all had records in the charts simultaneously.

The identity of such surrogate musicians is, understandably, reluctantly divulged and rarely do they drag themselves out of obscurity. There are, of course, some well-known session musicians: stalwarts like Chris Spedding and Herbie Flowers are celebrities in their own right. But the majority are destined to remain unknown, though highly competent, musicians, trailing a list of discreet record sleeve name-checks behind them.

The Stranglers — you have it on good authority — have never resorted to the use of session musicians except when recording sounds that were beyond their own instrumental range. But there are few of these occasions

to mention.

On **Rattus**, Eric Clarke, a Welsh coal-miner, sessioned on **Grip**. Then on **Black and White** another saxophonist, Laura Logic, played on **Hey! (Rise of the Robots)**. By comparison, the extent to which

Paul: I had a conventional musical training at the Guildhall School of Music. I did the performer’s course there. When I left I was a bit confused because I came out with an orthodox orchestral technique, but my leanings have always been towards playing



session men were involved on **Aural Sculpture** must look like a takeover, even though they featured on less than half the album. Here Chris Twomey talks briefly to trombonist Paul Nieman (one of six session musicians featured on the LP) about the session in Brussels and the progression of his career.

I spent a lot of years unlearning much of my conventional training.

Chris: Could you tell me a bit about yourself?

jazz and pop music. If you play that kind of music with an orchestral technique you end up sounding very square and in a kind of no-man’s land. I spent a lot of years really un-learning much of my conventional training.

One of the problems was that I’d see other jazz musicians distorting what I thought was the orthodox way of playing, in order that it should serve their musical purposes. It took a lot of un-learning before I felt that I could do that without breaking some orthodox rule.

I’ve been involved in all sorts of things — I’ve had some interesting jobs. Immediately after I left the Guildhall my “baptism of fire” was

playing for about three months at an ice-rink in Bournemouth. It drove me spare. Fortunately, about halfway through my contract I was offered another job at the jazz festival in Avignon, Southern France. I took the opportunity of going out there and meeting many great jazz musicians, by putting a deputy in this ice show. When I got back, though, the manager of the ice-rink was absolutely livid, so he took £2.50 of my holiday pay and handed me a letter on the official headed ice-rink paper which said, "Dear Paul Nieman, when you die you won't go to heaven, you'll send a deputy..." Anyway, life improved and it's continued that way.

Chris: *Is it still quite normal for you to run around playing the odd opera here and the odd rock gig there?*

Paul: Yes.

Chris: *And you find that suitable, do you?*

Paul: I find it's not just suitable, it's really necessary because the different worlds feed off each other. The straighter world brings a discipline which I don't naturally have. Similarly, pop music and jazz give me another way of looking at straight music, which is a bit freer, has more liberty in it and more room for interpretation.

Chris: *How do straight musicians react towards someone like you?*

Paul: That's a good question because it used to be the case that if you were involved in one scene you were rather frowned upon for crossing the border and showing any interest in the other. Whereas, in America, it's absolutely normal for orchestral players to play jazz, and to play it authentically. A very good example is Winton Marsallis, who seems to be extremely successful both as a classical and jazz trumpeter.

The ground has been broken a bit over here as well now, but it's been much slower. Until recently I was always quite wary about playing different music in different styles with different techniques because I felt I wasn't too well respected for crossing over.

Chris: *Did you find it hardest adapting from say, pop to classical, or what?*

Paul: At the time, because I'd done less pop and less jazz, I found it technically difficult going from classical music to jazz. But things improved when I got a bit of clarity in my own mind about the different technical approaches required for the different worlds. I remember on one occasion playing with the symphony

orchestra at college and being pulled up short for playing jazz quavers in a Brahms symphony — which I wasn't quite aware of at the time!

Chris: *There must be a certain amount of rub-off between one and the other.*

Paul: Not now because I've got a clarity about it in my own mind, but at the time I didn't know quite what I was doing. There was a spill-over without my really being aware of it. I've definitely learned.

Chris: *How did you become involved with The Stranglers?*

Paul: Through Laurie Latham, who I'd just done some work with on an album by a guy called Anthony Moore, who used to be in a band called Slap Happy and who wrote the song **No Parlez** on the Paul Young LP. Laurie phoned me actually, while I was playing in an opera in Florence and asked me to come to Brussels where they were recording. I was able to fly there the next day.

Chris: *Had you worked with Paul Spong and Tim Whitehead before?*

Paul: Well, I've known Tim Whitehead for a while. We're in an all brass band called Elephant. But I tended to meet Paul Spong in more commercial circles. He's done sessions with people like Wham! and Haircut One Hundred. We don't often work together, but I must say the chemistry was really good on this occasion.

Chris: *How long were you in Brussels for?*

Paul: The session lasted from 11 o'clock one morning to 5 o'clock the following morning. In fact, the band had booked hotel rooms for us, and the idea was that we'd get a night's sleep before returning home to England. As it turned out, we had to work all night, so we didn't get to our hotel until 5.30 in the morning. We were due to leave Brussels at about 6.30 am, so I had this big hotel suite to myself for about an hour! The hotel concierge thought we were mad.

Chris: *So you worked continuously for the best part of twenty-four hours?*

Paul: Just about. We had some breaks of course.

Chris: *Had the arrangements already been written for you?*

The exchange of ideas was really exciting.

Paul: No, there was nothing written, we worked them out together. The exchange of ideas was really exciting. For example, we were hearing the backing tape of **Ice**

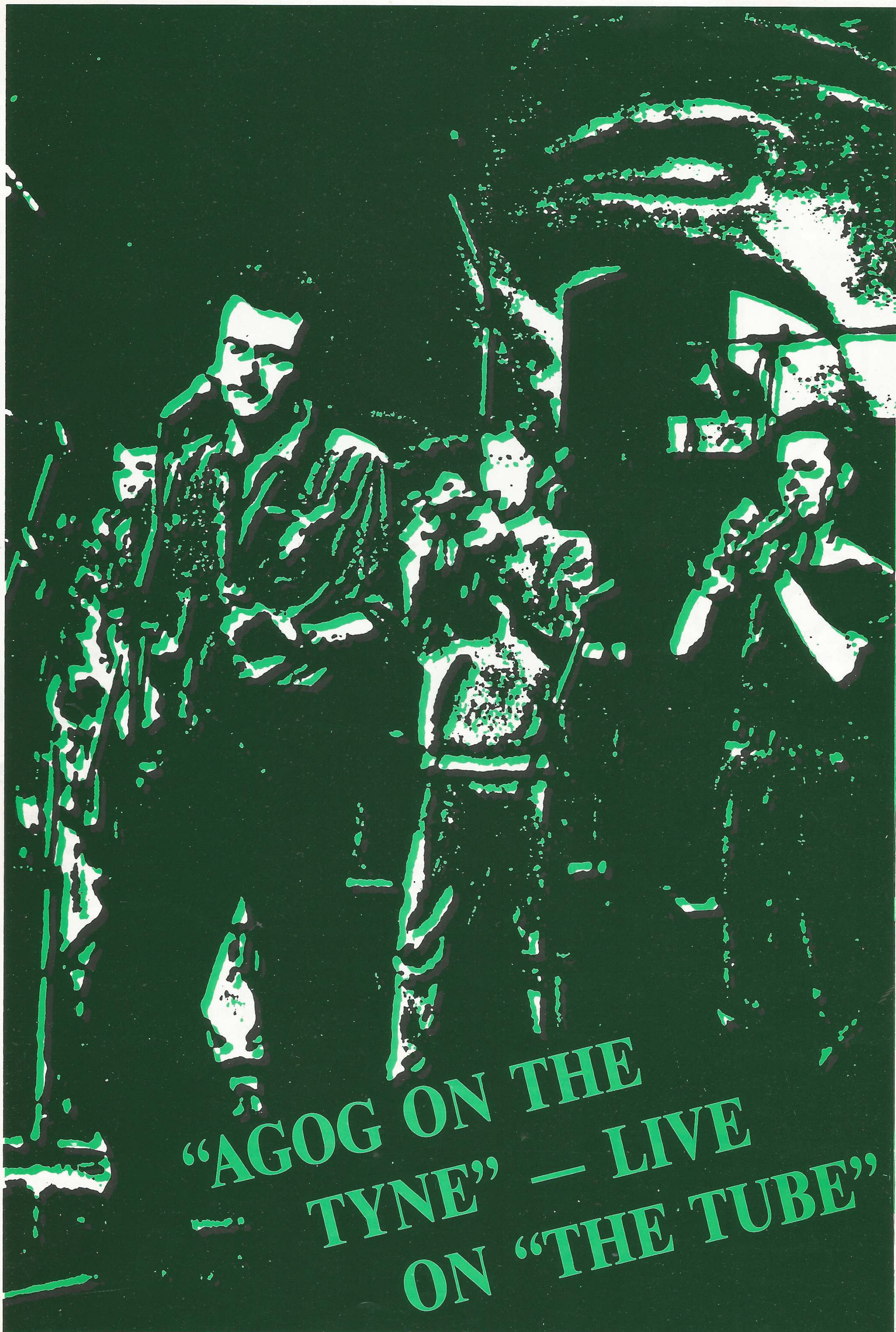
Queen for the first time, and while this was being played we were messing about, searching for inspiration. Hugh was in the studio listening to us warming up, when suddenly he leapt out of his seat, yelling, "Eureka. That's it!" to something I was doing — a sound which I didn't really think was anything in particular. It was just a silly noise. Hugh's having the imagination to see the potential of a doodle ended up being a simple but really effective brass addition to the song. I'm referring to the glissando which features during the refrain of **Ice Queen**.



Chris: *Did the band pass on many of their own ideas?*

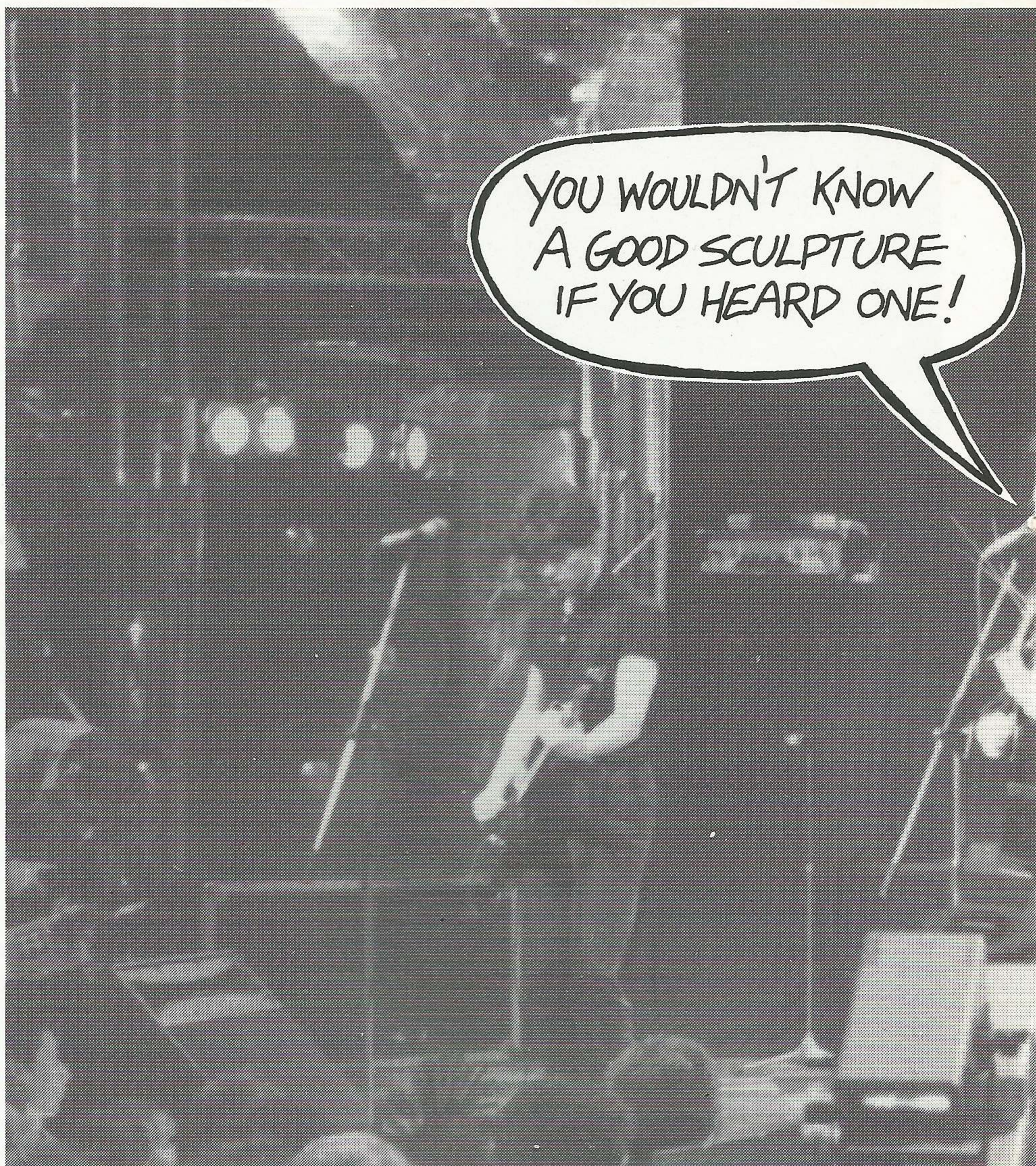
Paul: Yes, but at the same time they didn't ram them down our throats. What was more likely was that either Laurie would have an idea, or we'd have an idea, and then it would be discussed and argued and through that process it would get moulded into something coherent.

The ideas didn't always come from The Stranglers. On **Punch and Judy** the musical ideas originated from the brass. But where they were placed and how they were played — that's the kind of thing that got discussed. I don't think there was anything that went down that the band weren't aware of and able to consider.



"AGOG ON THE
TYNE" — LIVE
ON "THE TUBE"

THE



“Who needs mere music

Friday 7th December 1984. The Daily Mail headline reads “No Mercy”. I find myself driving through the twilight on the Newcastle trail, eagerly awaiting the appearance of the band in Tyne-Tees studios.

During the afternoon the three bands due to appear “live in studio” went through their soundchecks, the other two bands being The Art of Noise and The Icicle Works. The Stranglers’ set was made up of a trio from *Aural Sculpture* — *Let Me Down Easy*, *No Mercy* and the humdinger *Uptown*.

According to Ian McNabb of The Icicle Works, The Art of Noise were not actually present in person; “They had their soundcheck carried out for them! They seem to be a group who don’t really exist, compared to The Stranglers, whom I really like (honest) and who are a real band possessing a high degree of solidarity.” Who needs mere musicians when you have Trevor Horn?

On entering the studio my initial impression was one of a lack of size; three stages in close proximity,

surrounded by unfinished pillars and staircases, giving them a half-dressed effect. The Stranglers’ stage was matt black (surprise, surprise!) with a backdrop featuring the 12-foot ear sculpture from the album cover, which had made the long journey from Bath. The ear was fortunate to appear as it was originally felt to be a fire hazard.

Amidst last-minute preparations by technicians and photographers setting up shop, I found JJ swinging around on the scaffolding and put it to him that he’s a ringer for American comedian Steve Martin in the *No Mercy* video. JJ, with customary boyish grin, replied “Who?”.

I then asked about the “new sound” on *No Mercy* and the other current material and suggested that the aural and visual image of this album seems much simpler than in the case of earlier material and that even the massive swelling organs seem to be absent.

JJ. “Not really, Dave still has the massive gear. It’s just visually deceptive. We also now have a *Fairlight* which produces a very wide



ians when you have Trevor Horn?"

range of sounds."

PJ. "Even the lunatic fringe sounds, like the output of SPK?"

JJ. "Is this an interview?"

PJ. Err....splutter!!!"

JJ. "Well, I saw *Einstürzende Neubauten* about a year ago and they were really good. We can produce a sound like that if we want."

PJ. "So can we expect The Stranglers to pulverise stages with pneumatic drilling equipment in the near future?"

JJ. "No need. We demolish stagesand people anyway!"

At this point the first punters started to infiltrate the studio and JJ sped off backstage, leaving sax player Alex quite perturbed by the immaturity of the incoming crowd.

After tolerating The Art of Noise toying with the sounds of car doors slamming, and Paula Yates interviewing a chap who "creates fashion" from jelly moulds and diving suits, followed by a rather enjoyable set from The Icicle Works, we were finally treated to The Stranglers.

The band took to the stage at 6.40 pm to the strains of **You Got Good Taste** by The Cramps. The band were somewhat sheepishly followed on to the stage by their "new" brass section comprising of Alex Gifford on sax and Hilary Kops and Martin Veysey on trumpets. According to Hugh this was the première live performance with this line-up. After suffering **Radio Clash** over the PA, we were relieved to see Jools Holland brandishing a copy of **STRANGLED** and introducing The Stranglers with, "You've read the book, now see the band." With a waft of dry ice and Hugh symbolically clutching his ear the band eased into **Let Me Down Easy**, which grows on you with every hearing.

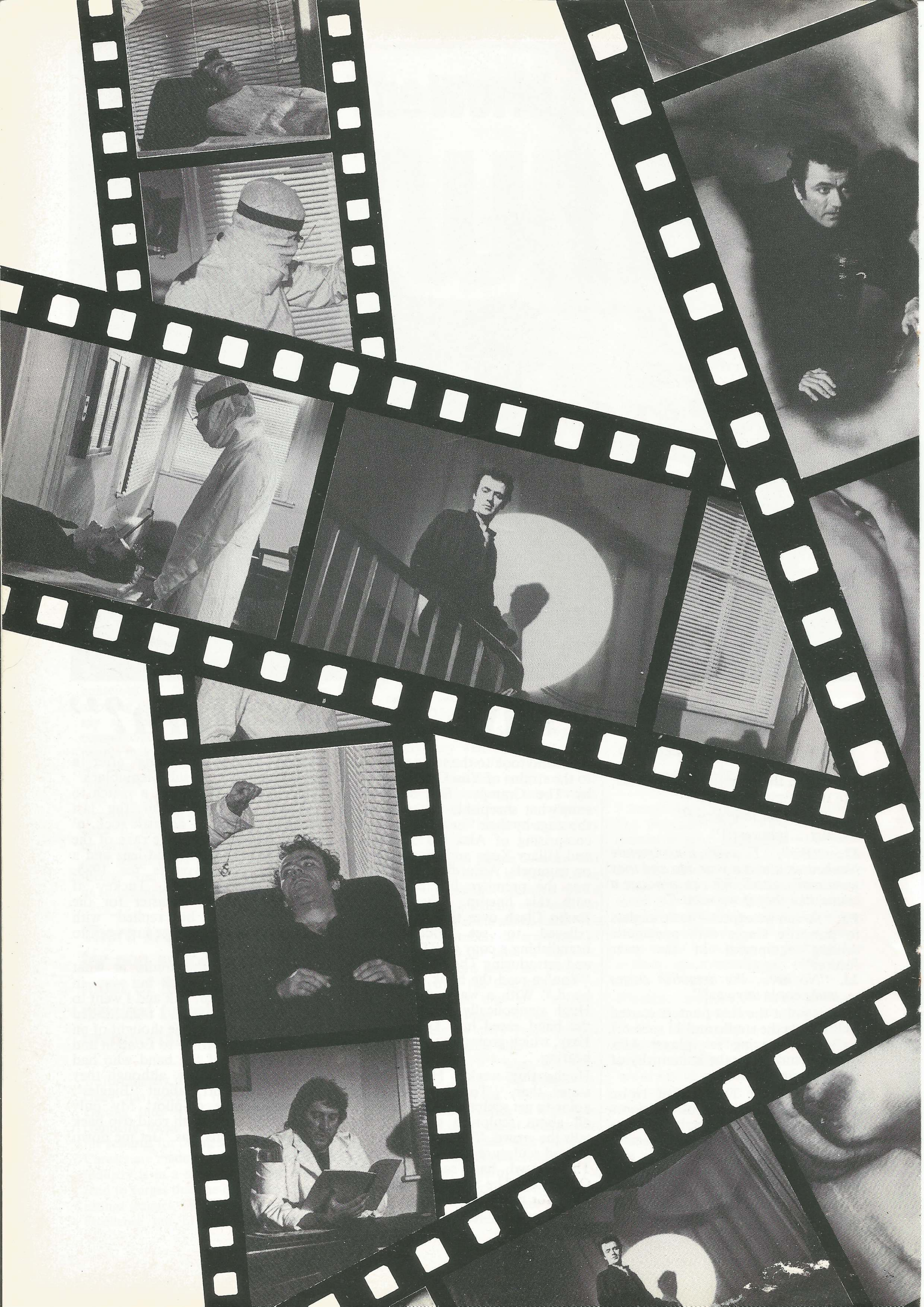
Hugh, this week's Henry Moore, states that, "Tonight you're only going to get sculpture. 'The Tube' is all about sculpture tonight", then tells the crowd, "You wouldn't know a good sculpture if you heard one!". The crowd had sadly to agree. Obviously, The Stranglers have been away for much too long.

Next track — **No Mercy**. The brass

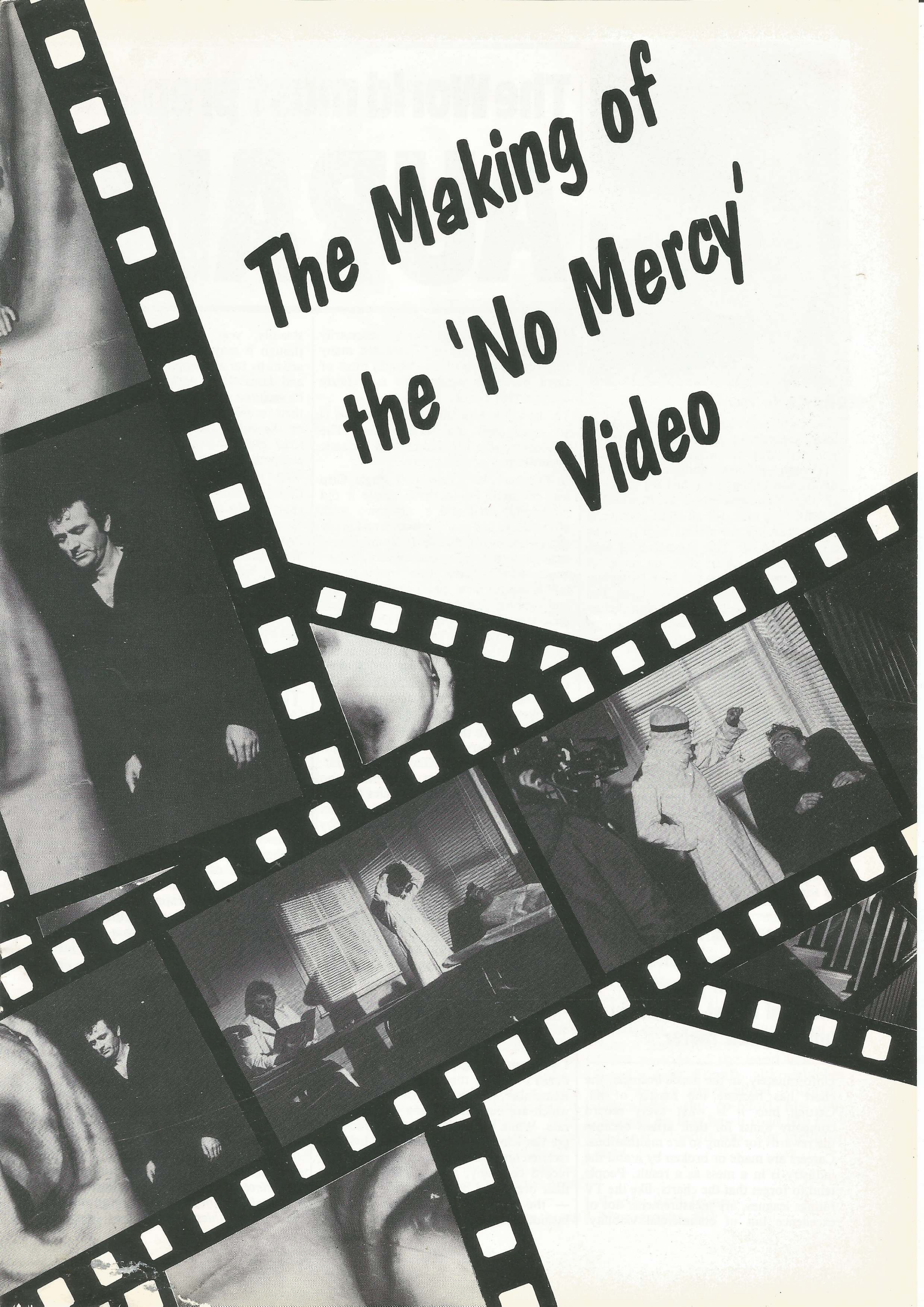
section rescues the song after a disappointing "sub-Meninblack" intro. Finally, there was a switch to the old "Kinkade" for the last number **Uptown** — acoustic rock 'n' roll at its very best, fave rave of the night for both scribe and lens and a definite stage favourite for 1985. Asking manager Bill Tuckey if tonight's set was a taster for the February tour, he replied with mercenary glee, "No, we just want to sell more records!"

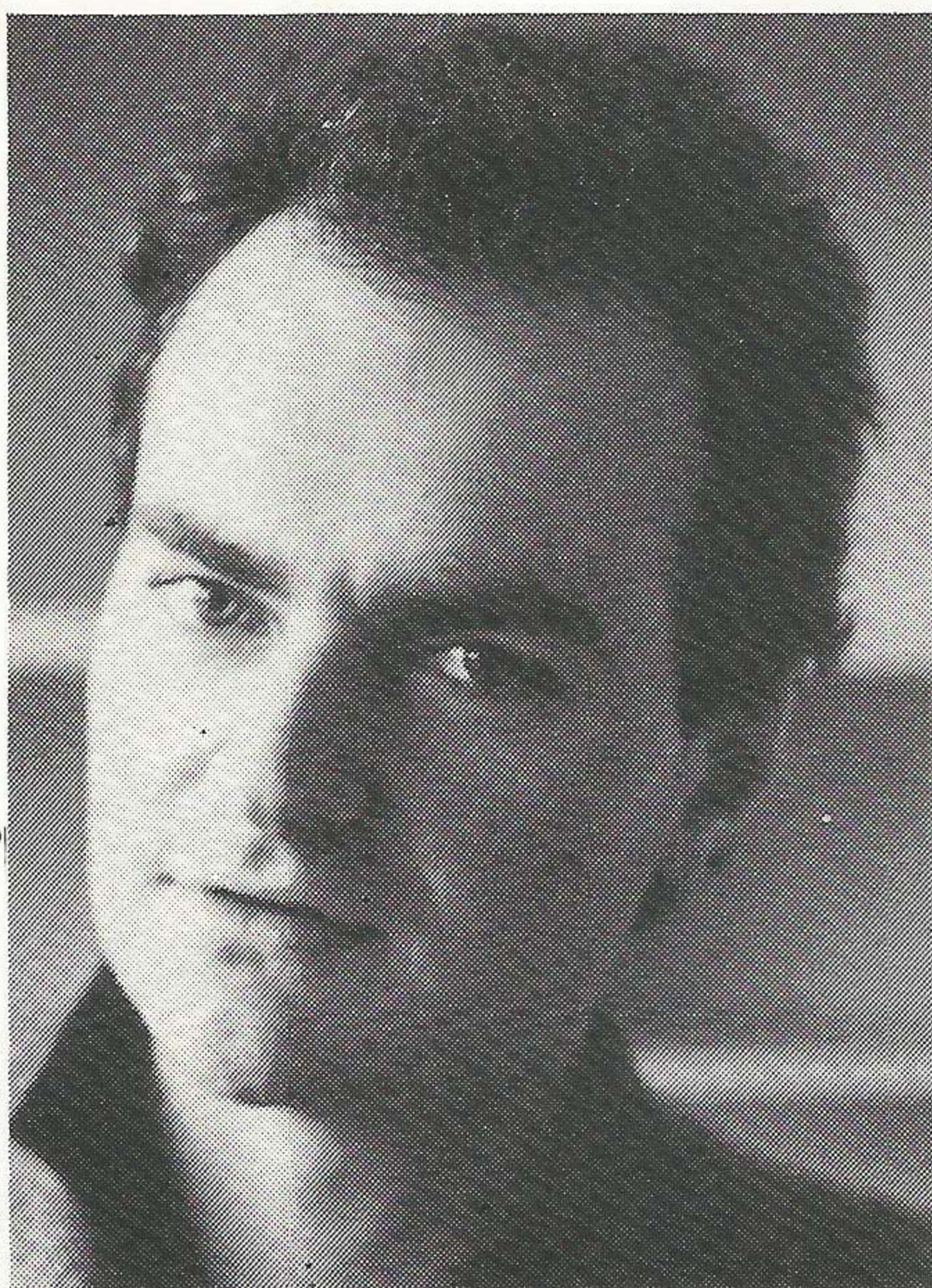
Emerging from the studio at what seemed like 11 o'clock but was, in fact, only 7.30 pm, Nik and I went to sample the Tyne grog. I then headed home, not relishing the thought of an 8-hour coach journey to London and I felt envious of the band who had hired a light aircraft, although they did have to worry about "Biggles" Greenfield, the co-pilot! My only thought on that harsh road trip back to the metropolis was "Jet me down easy...".

Words: Paul Jenner
Photographs: Nik



The Making of the 'No Mercy' Video





By Chris Twomey

It was while nervously watching the recent chart progress of *Aural Sculpture* that I got the idea to write a few words. Surprised at how disappointingly the album was faring. I reached for my copy of the "Guinness Book of British Hit Albums" (a must for all chart observers) to compare its movements with previous LP releases by The Stranglers. I was surprised to discover that, on paper at least, *Aural Sculpture* has been struggling in an unprecedented manner. Even *The Meninblack*, which is widely regarded as "the one that got away" would appear to have made a greater impact on the British public. So what went wrong?

In drawing a false conclusion I became conscious of falling into an old trap; allowing the pop charts to have the final say in determining the album's true commercial worth. I suspect a lot of other people make the same mistake. After all, we have become accustomed to seeing Stranglers' albums leap straight into the Top Ten. So when, as in this case, it fails, something would appear to be amiss. But does it matter? Is it really of any importance or not? Surely it's the music itself which really matters, not the chart listing? And anyway, chart positions tell us surprisingly little about actual sales.

There are many formulae for pop success and in most of them purely musical talent is a fairly unimportant factor

Unfortunately, in the music business, the chart has become the master of all. Getting into it is what every record company wants for their artists because the rewards for doing so are multifarious. Careers are made or broken by it and the industry is in a mess as a result. People tend to forget that the charts, like the TV ratings leagues, are measurements not of excellence but of commercial viability.

The World must prepare its AURAL SC

These two qualities don't necessarily coincide. Far from it. There are many formulae for pop success and in most of them purely musical talent is a fairly unimportant factor.

To show just how influential the chart is we need look no further than The Stranglers, who provide us with a classic illustration.

In February 1977 their first single *Grip* was released. For a debut single it did remarkably well and by its third week after release had reached number 44 in the charts. However, due to a silly mistake it was prevented from getting any higher. When *Music Week* (the trade paper) published the new chart the week *Grip* had moved up to number 44, they inadvertently left it off the chart (a record called *Everybody's Talkin' About Love* by Silver Convention appeared in its place). The result was that record dealers, noting that *Grip* had disappeared from sight, stopped ordering it from suppliers, and likewise DJs stopped playing it.

Ironically, until this happened, *Grip* had been selling very well and all the signs were pointing to a Top Twenty hit. Although this charting error made no difference to the number of sales already achieved, its effect was to obstruct severely the record's momentum, thereby curtailing its lifespan.

My guess is that few people have any real idea what the chart is representing anyway. We assume that because a record is at Number One it is doing very well, but what does it tell us about actual sales? The chart represents a totally different scale of sales according to the time of the year. For instance, record sales are generally much higher over the Christmas period than at any other time of the year. Therefore a Christmas Number One is obviously going to carry more prestige than a summer Number One.

Like many things, it's what the chart **doesn't** tell us that's really significant. Remember, it's just a list of those records which are currently selling at the fastest rate. While the rock acts of the moment are the icing on the cake which helps to sweeten the annual financial report of any record company, most of them rely for their bread and butter on their catalogue — the artists who may not be very fashionable, but who go on selling

steadily, year in, year out. Unlikely though it may seem, the most lucrative artists by far are people like Shirley Bassey and James Last. Although they may not be seen too often on "Top of the Pops", their records are bought over long periods by the silent majority of middle-of-the-road fans who also keep their record companies afloat, even amid the most severe drought of Top Ten singles hits.

Classical music rarely features on the chart for the same reason. But many great classical works sell in vast quantities and may have a longevity of several decades. With the lifespan of the average pop record being considerably shorter than this, it is not surprising that music snobs scorn the pop world where the emphasis is, more often than not, on rapid turnover and predominantly forgettable records.

Through *Aural Sculpture* The Stranglers have attempted to set themselves apart from all this nonsense.

Through *Aural Sculpture* (the manifesto), The Stranglers have attempted to set themselves apart from all this nonsense: "When those of us who are committed to the creation of *Aural Sculpture* can no longer sit and tolerate the prostitution of sound that is proliferating around us, it is time to speak out." But while their efforts may be laudable and somewhat overdue, these words have fallen on deaf and, just as likely, unappreciative ears as far as the public at large are concerned.

Recently, someone I know drew my attention to a passage of a book he was reading, written by a modern French historian called Philippe Aries. Without wishing to appear too pretentious, I would like to repeat a part of it here:

"It is difficult for us today to understand the intensity of the old relationship between people and things. It survives in the collector, who has a real passion for the objects in his collection and loves to contemplate them. Moreover, his passion is never completely disinterested; although the objects taken individually may be worthless, the fact of bringing

elf to herald the advent of SCULPTURE

them together in a unique series gives them value. By definition, therefore, the collector is a speculator...

If we go forward in the capitalist evolution, the aptitude for speculation is preserved but the taste for contemplation disappears and there is no longer a sensual connection between man and his wealth. A good example is the car. In spite of its enormous hold on our imagination, the car, once it has been acquired, ceases to inspire contemplation. The object of present attention is no longer this car, but the more recent model that has already replaced it in the owner's desire. Or else one does not love this car as much as one loves the make, the brand to which it belongs and that wins all prizes for performance. Our industrial civilisations no longer believe that things possess a soul "which attaches itself to our soul and compels it to love". Things have become means of production, or objects to be consumed or devoured. They no longer constitute a "treasure"...

My friend commented, quite validly, that, although Aries used the car as an example to back up his observation, the same might also be said about pop music in general, where the emphasis is on disposability and on one fad superseding another.

The pop song has become the aural equivalent of "Smash" potato.

The pop song has become the aural equivalent of "Smash" potato. All you have to do is get a set of ingredients (you've heard them all listed before), add water and stir. If you chance upon the right combination you've got a product people can consume — a hit. If, however, you foul up somewhere along the line, you've got yourself a splodgy mess no-one really wants. Simple as that.

Forget artistic integrity. Lyrical profundity went out with the invention of stereo. Today's songwriter exhibits his genius in lines like, "War is stupid, and people are stupid..."

The Beatles unwittingly set a precedent in pop history and, as a result, are in the enviable position of having everyone else

aspire to their achievements. Although many have challenged their sovereignty in the fifteen or so years since the band split, no-one has posed any serious threat. Yet what was it about The Beatles that gives them such awe-inspiring status? Certainly, between them they wrote a fair number of memorable tunes and made a bob or two in the process. But musically they never denied the influence many fifties' rock 'n' roll singers had over them. Even Elvis "The King" Presley owed a more than passing allegiance to the Gospel/jazz diet he was fed for breakfast as a youngster. So where does this leave bands like The Stranglers? Are they any less entitled to a share of immortality? In their own way, aren't they just as unique and innovatory?

Frankie Goes To Hollywood and Wham! may be the demi-gods of today, but where will they be in two, five or even ten years' time?

Perhaps it is through consistency that we are able to distinguish between bands of real worth and those destined to fall victim to consumer amnesia. In any one year we are treated to somewhere in the region of 280 Top Forty hits. I challenge you to sit back and, unprompted, list fifty of those you've heard in the previous twelve months. Even if you succeed, doesn't that say something for the disposability of the pop charts? What about the other 230 you couldn't recall, never mind the thousands of other singles released which don't get anywhere near the charts?

Consistent hit-makers represent a small minority of all chart acts. It's one thing to have a hit record. It's quite another to go on and on having hits. To do so takes not only a considerable reservoir of talent, but good business sense as well to keep abreast of this very fickle market. Frankie Goes To Hollywood and Wham! may be the demi-gods of today, but where will they be in two, five or even ten years' time, I wonder? There's something to be said for being an "unfashionable" band.

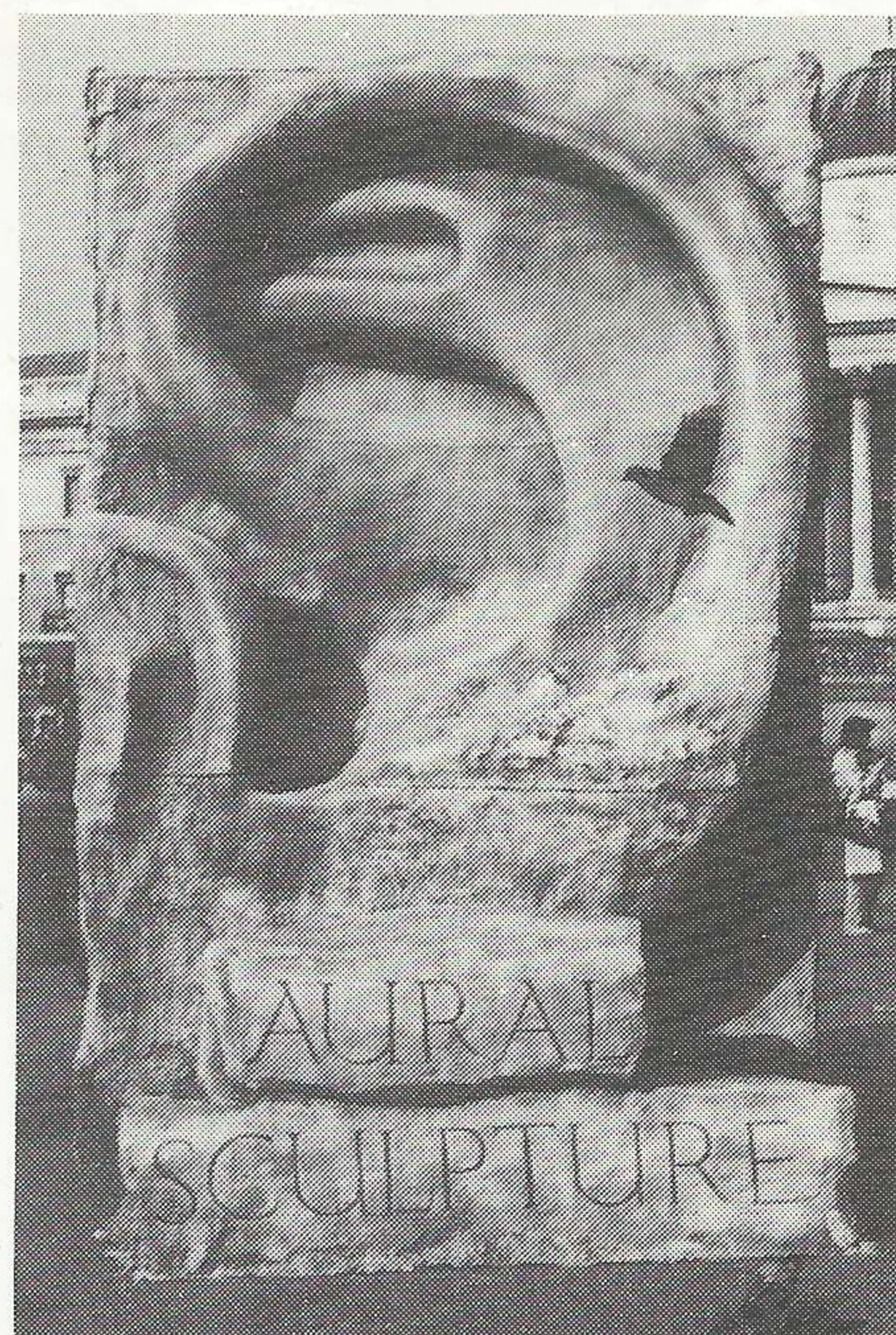


Photo: Maggie Ashford

At least you don't have to rely on your image to sell records for you.

Referring back to what Philippe Aries had to say about the car and how once acquired it ceased to inspire contemplation, "*The object of present attention is no longer this car, but the more recent model that has already replaced it in the owner's desire.*" The practice of "engineering" fads has often struck me as one of the music industry's great misdoings, particularly as I have witnessed the frustration it tends to cause.

One band I know got so sick of having their demo tape turned down by every record company they approached that they ended each consultation by asking what was wrong with the songs. To their amazement, one record company executive told them the songs were great and that if he'd been issued with a Carte Blanche he would have been interested in signing them to the label. But he was under strict orders from his superiors to only consider groups with a particular, specified sound — a sound which was deemed to become the Next Big Thing.

That the industry has become so callous and mercenary in its outlook only confirms my cynical view that record companies are interested in product first and music second. Under the circumstances, The Stranglers can hardly be criticised for rejecting the word "music" in favour of the more grandiose term "**Aural Sculpture**".

Although I may be accused of making a meal of something that was, after all, said partially in jest, **Aural Sculpture** is a provocation and as such deserves some serious contemplation.

DAVE'S AURAL QUEST

Stephen Applebaum, a computer journalist and STRANGLED subscriber, was interested to read in his copy of STRANGLED number 17 that there was to be an adventure game on the cassette version of **Aural Sculpture**. He contacted SIS to enquire about the possibility of meeting Dave to talk about his interest in computers and Aural Quest in particular. Here you can read the interview which resulted from that meeting.

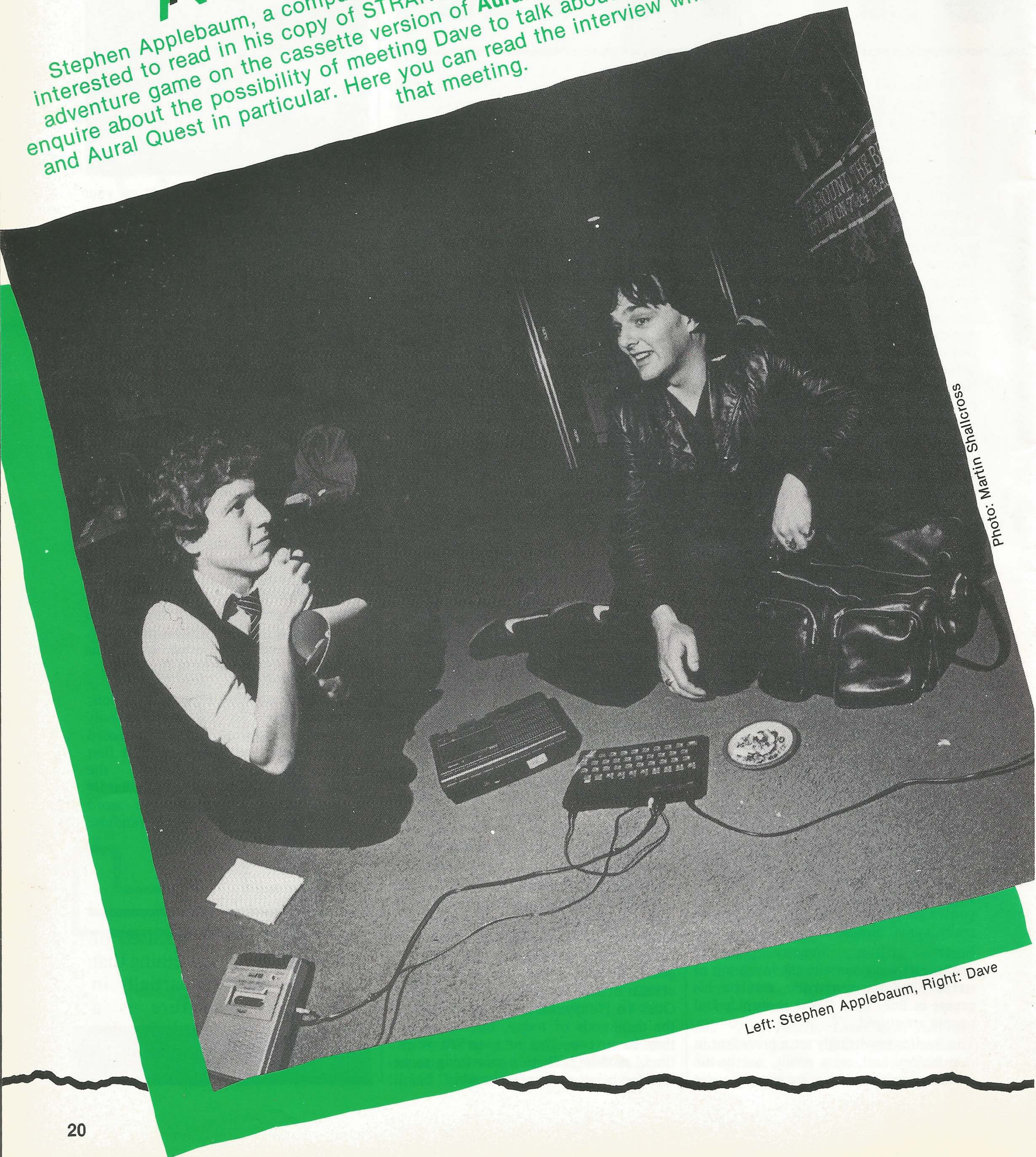


Photo: Martin Shallcross

Left: Stephen Applebaum, Right: Dave

Dave Greenfield's mastery of the piano keyboard is almost matched by his enthusiasm for micro computers and adventure games. As a result, an adventure called *Aural Quest*, featuring the band, has been included on the cassette version of *Aural Sculpture*.

The Stranglers would seem an odd subject for a computer game. But, as Dave and the others have shown, their past exploits fit the bill for a fun, and often quite tricky, micro adventure.

I chatted with Dave (from the floor of a CBS office) about his interest in computers and, in particular, about *Aural Quest*, which he wrote alongside Mike Turner and others of Star Dreams, a computer firm in Seaford.

Before going any further, just what is an adventure game? Basically, an adventure game is an imaginary world, the locations of which are programmed into a micro's memory. Using the computer as his/her eyes, the player can explore the programmer's mindscape. But exploring is only part of the fun. More often than not, several challenges must be met before the game can be completed. This can take anything from a matter of hours to several months; a fact Dave was quick to testify to.

Some might think that Dave's interest in computers was an offshoot from the music; new programmable keyboards forcing him to learn some of the basic technicalities. I put this to him.

"No, not specifically. I was interested in computers before I got so technical on the keyboard side. It was through a friend of mine, Mike Turner, who works for Star Dreams. I've known him since I was 11. He got interested in computers, which in turn interested me. So I bought an Atari 800, from which I started learning some of the basics. Mike then got a Spectrum and said it was great, but I didn't have much time for it, what with other commitments. However, a short while ago I was down at Seaford, where Star Dreams is based, and saw the Spectrum and some adventure games. I liked it and so I bought one."

Adventure games are obviously Dave's forte, but what is it that fascinates him about these, sometimes mentally frustrating, games?

"I don't know, It's the challenge I suppose; a continual game that can go on for ages and ages and ages, in the case of *Knight's Quest*, for months and months."

Was it his idea originally then to put the game on the cassette of *Aural Sculpture*?

"I honestly can't remember. Somebody in the band suggested that we do a computer game or something. I

thought, "Right — adventure." That's automatic for me to think of adventures. So my girlfriend and I started working out some rough ideas. We then went down and spent some time in Seaford, finalised the idea with the three of them and they thought up a few embellishments. I think it was Mike who suggested the watch thing in Tokyo."

"As the buyer is getting something for nothing, it's not really ripping anybody off."

Putting a computer game on the cassette is all very well, but mightn't the band come under more criticism? On the launch of *Feline*, for instance, several music critics said that the band had run out of steam, often only taking into account the mellow and melodic music, but ignoring the acute sharpness of the lyrics. What if they now say that the game is there to supplement the music and collar new buyers from a different market?

"As it is only on the cassette version, I don't think that'll be said. But, hopefully, it will expand the market and get our music to a wider audience: Spectrum users, for example: That is obviously CBS's idea: a marketing thing. But as the buyer is getting an adventure for nothing, it's not really ripping anybody off."

Which then is the more lucrative market: the music or the software?

"Well, it would be the music for us, because we're making nothing from the software. But I don't know. It's an interesting thought. Though nowadays the big computer boom is over."

Putting a computer game on to an album isn't a totally new idea. Musicians such as ex-Buzzcock Pete Shelley, on his *XL-1* album, and Shakin' Stevens have both used them. But on the whole they were pretty low quality arcade games. Had Dave seen them before considering the idea of putting one on *Aural Sculpture*?

"Yes. When the idea on this came up I checked through the Shakin' Stevens one. I loaded it, played it once and haven't bothered to do it again. I was disappointed in it..."

But why an adventure — apart from his obvious interest? Surely, once an adventure is completed, it is redundant?

"Yes, that's true. But hopefully it will take people a while to work out ... with luck. But then again, that's the same for any adventure. I mean, you can always go through and try and get your time down. I think it takes a minimum of 137 moves to complete *Aural Quest*."

Although Dave and Mike Turner wrote *Aural Quest*, they did have the help of The Quill. The Quill is a program which cuts out all the donkey work of

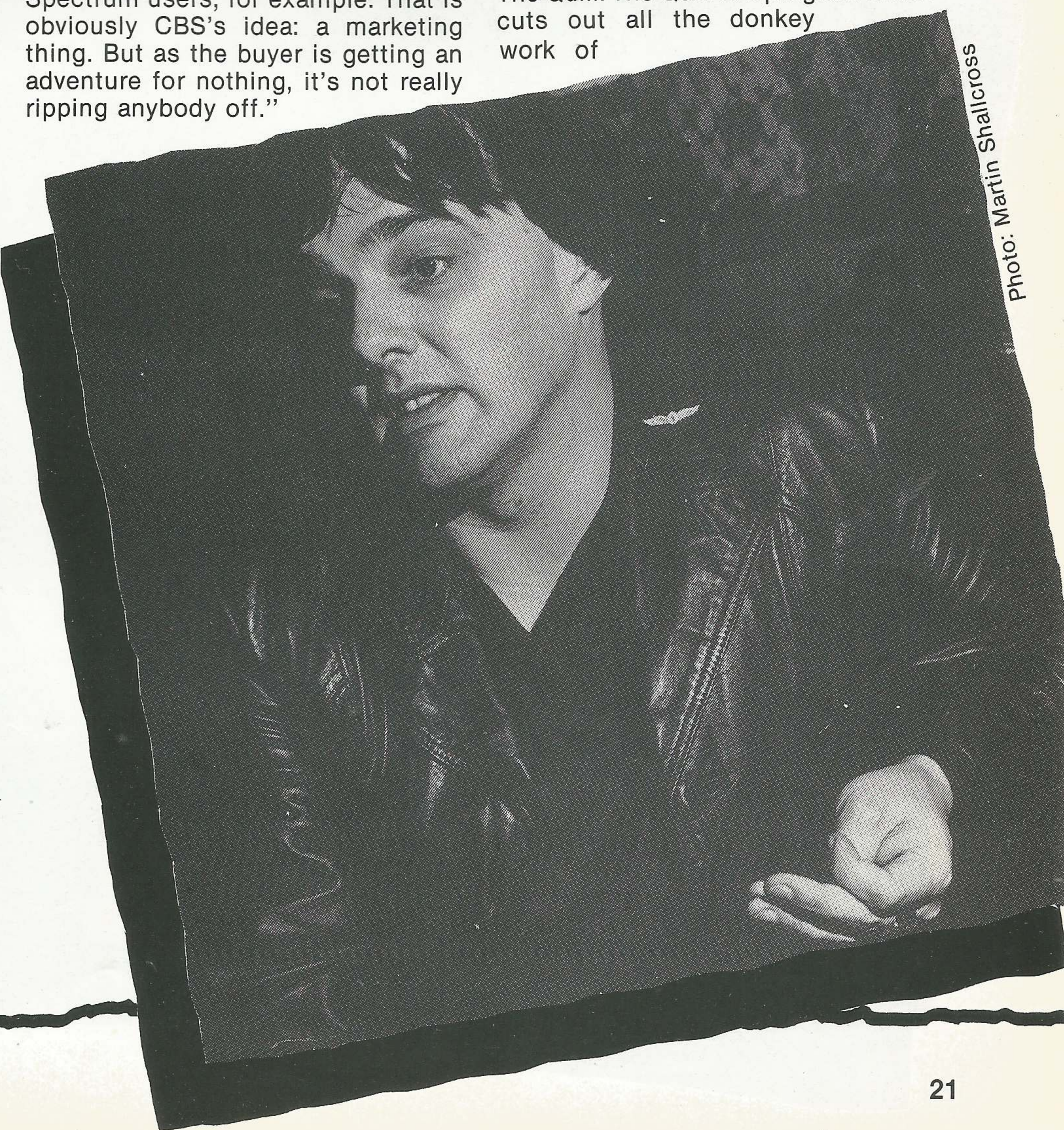


Photo: Martin Shallcross

programming adventures, by providing the basic building blocks ready made. These include tables for vocabulary, location descriptions, objects, events, and even an interpreter. The first few tables allow the programmer to enter words, through a computer's keyboard, which he wants the player to be able to use, make up different locations, name different things lying about in each location and say what happens when the player tries to carry out an action: say, pick up an axe. The interpreter, on the other hand, "reads" whatever the player enters and searches through the vocabulary to see if the words have been included in it. If they have not, the player will usually have to enter something else which the computer can understand. In this way the player can interact with the surroundings. The Quill is far more complex than can be shown here, but I hope that what I have said gives a rough idea of what it does.

When Dave was working on Aural Quest, The Quill was only available for the Spectrum (it is now also available for the Commodore 64). Why then did they use it, as this surely lessens its appeal?

"It was originally decided to do it just for the Spectrum in order to get it

finished quickly. Mike Turner decided to use The Quill. We originally thought the delivery date was going to be much sooner, but Mike was working on The Sandman Cometh, another adventure, at the same time as Quest. We started recording earlier in the year, and then after we'd done that session we had more ideas. So we delayed the whole album. Originally it was going to be around May.

The Sinclair Spectrum is an incredibly popular micro, so how does he think the game could do on the software market and how does it compare, in his mind, with those already available?

**Humour
is something
lacking from the
adventure
market.**

"You need something special to do well, which this certainly isn't. It's an average Quill adventure which relates to the band. Obviously, if people know the history of the band it helps, though it is not essential."

Dave is quite modest about Aural Quest. It is in fact as good as, or even better than, many of the Quill adventures on the market. Puzzle fans will find it most perplexing in places and even get the odd laugh. Humour is something lacking from the adventure market.

Aural Quest is quite down to earth compared to many on the market; or at least the majority of it is. As Bill, The Stranglers' tour manager, it is your job to fly to Nice, New York, Sweden, Tokyo and Brisbane to pick up payments for past gigs. At the same time you must collect four pieces of a giant ear which is to be used in exhibitions and shows. Anyone who remembers an interview between Kid Jensen and Hugh around the time of *Feline* coming out, might think this refers to Hugh calling a certain record company "the cement ear". Dave laughed at the suggestion, saying:

"That's a good one. No, nothing whatsoever to do with that. we have had an ear statue made which is being used and will be displayed in several places. In actual fact there are six

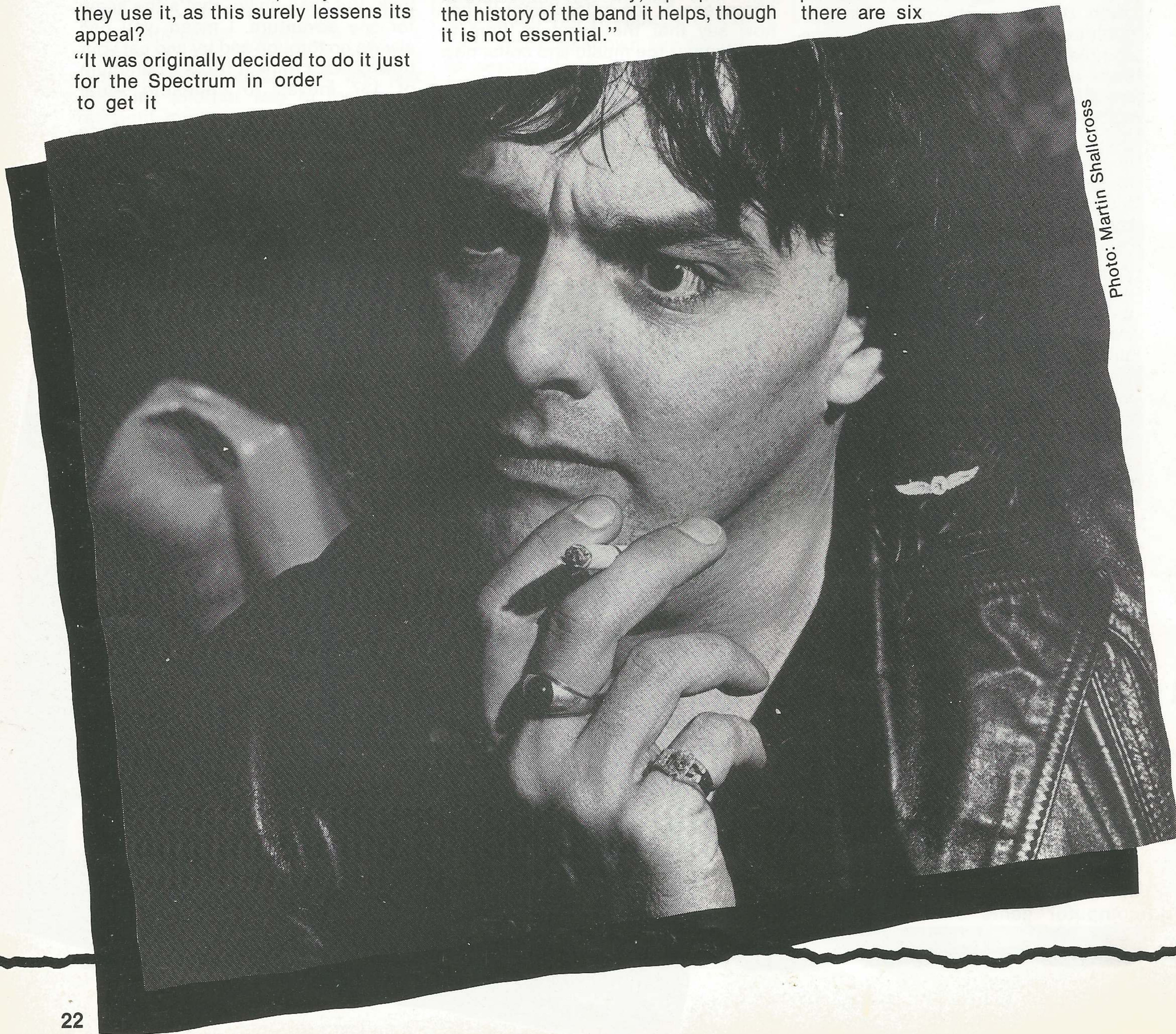


Photo: Martin Shallcross

pieces rather than four and it stands over twelve feet high ... it's very difficult to assemble."

Since working on Aural Quest, Dave has become quite proficient at playing the game and went through it during the interview, describing how each scene tied in with the band's past.

Some of the characters will be instantly recognisable. Dino, of **Dino Rap (Fire and Water)** fame, for instance, crops up in a pub. All the locations have been given their correct directions in relation to London. The pub, for example, is The Verulam Arms in Watford.

Dave went on to describe how each location related to the band:

"The first location is Nice, the obvious story being that we were arrested there. There was a riot at the University where we were doing a gig. For want of anything better, they blamed us for it. So, after leaving the gig and going out, we returned to the hotel, from whence we were taken by the police down to the detention centre. I was the lucky one, and was only held for two days or so, before being released without being charged. The others were charged, taken away to prison, got bail and got out. I think JJ was fined in the end."

Just as he describes this the Spectrum beeps out the first few bars of **Down In The Sewer**.

"We can honestly say that we saw the best, and the worst, accommodation in Nice."

"**Down In The Sewer** is used because those detention cells were the worst things I've ever seen. We can honestly say that we saw the best, and the worst, accommodation in Nice. We stayed in one of the best hotels because everything else was booked up, but this detention place was unbelievable. Jet spent the entire first night up killing cockroaches."

America has Bill being mugged in New York to the scratchy tones of **In The Shadows**. This, Dave says, did not really happen, but represents the time when they had all their equipment stolen. Have they ever returned to the original level of instruments?

"Oh yes. I built up the same, but have cut down now, as with the more modern stuff I can do the same, but need less. As far as the amplification goes, no, I've never reached exactly what I had before. I'm using about half the level."

In Sweden the wry humoured **All Quiet On The Eastern Front** plays, but it can hardly be heard above the noise in the CBS office. The Spectrum is well

known for its poor quality sound.

"The trouble with the Spectrum is that you can hardly hear it. I programmed the seven little snippets of tunes. It's very simple transferring them to The Quill. It is just a little formula multiplied by something and add a 0.04 or something." Dave has an incredible power of understating "something".

Tokyo is one of the trickiest locations to get through, but Brisbane provides the player with one of the funniest situations. But then again, after seeing The Stranglers perform **Nuclear Device** on stage, it is only to be expected. I asked Dave about the old stories surrounding JJ and Australia:

"I think they were slightly exaggerated. We had one point in Adelaide where there was some bother. At one gig there was a mass of uniformed police just standing around. They were distracting the gig with their uniforms, so Hugh told them to "go away". They followed us back to the hotel and we came to realise that they were following us. So we all went into one room and then they totally blew it. They burst in, we had about twenty odd of them in the one room and they tried to arrest Jet because they said he had made the remark. We were sitting there and they were trying to lift him out. In the end the Senior Police Officer came in, realised that they'd blown it and told his men to leave."

Finally Dave left The Stranglers' Australia and the game was over. I asked him about the game and how it related to the music. Was the album

still in keeping with the original "Aural Sculpture" concept? After all, Hugh had said that the band was trying to return to a more "natural" sound?

"Possibly. I can't remember the comment. There's a lot of keyboards on the new album; different effects and a lot of instrument simulation. As far as **Aural Sculpture** goes, that was merely the most pretentious name we could think up for the least pretentious music."

And so did the game point to more electronic sounds?

"Not consciously. But with new keyboards and especially the wave term (a computerised section for the wave), it turns it into something like a Fairlight synthesizer. You can sample sounds, the whole bit. It doesn't run from any micro. It's a specialised computer."

Does this mean, therefore, that he uses no other computer in his music?

"Yes, I don't link things up. Again, I've got multi-composing things like an MC4. Wave term can do that but I won't use it for that. I don't even use sequencers on stage."

As Stephen is now somewhat of an expert on the Aural Quest game, and as we at SIS are rather lost when it comes to computers, he has kindly agreed to answer your queries on the game. Please do not write to us but phone Stephen on (01) 636 6890 ext 216 during office hours.

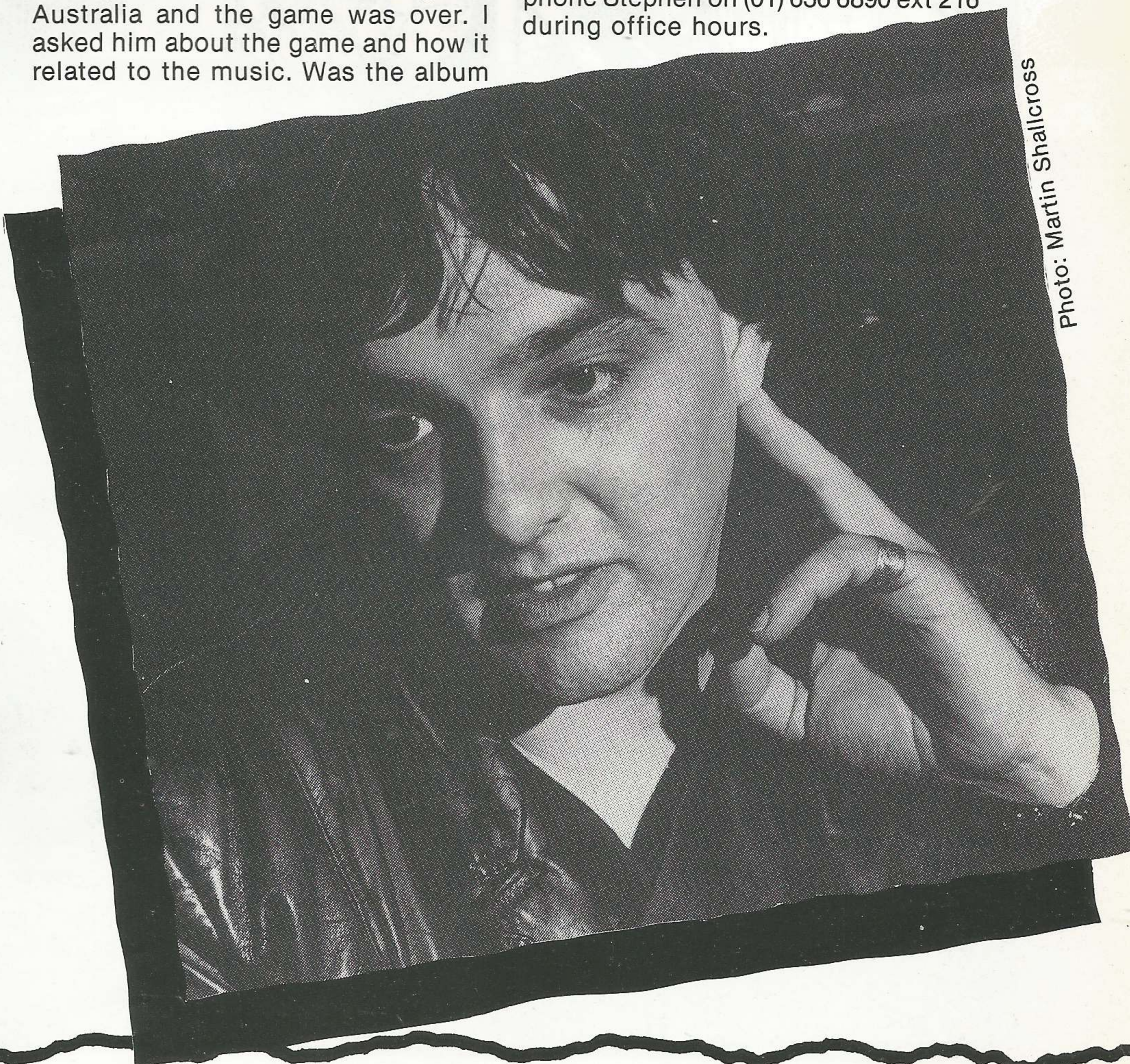


Photo: Martin Shallcross

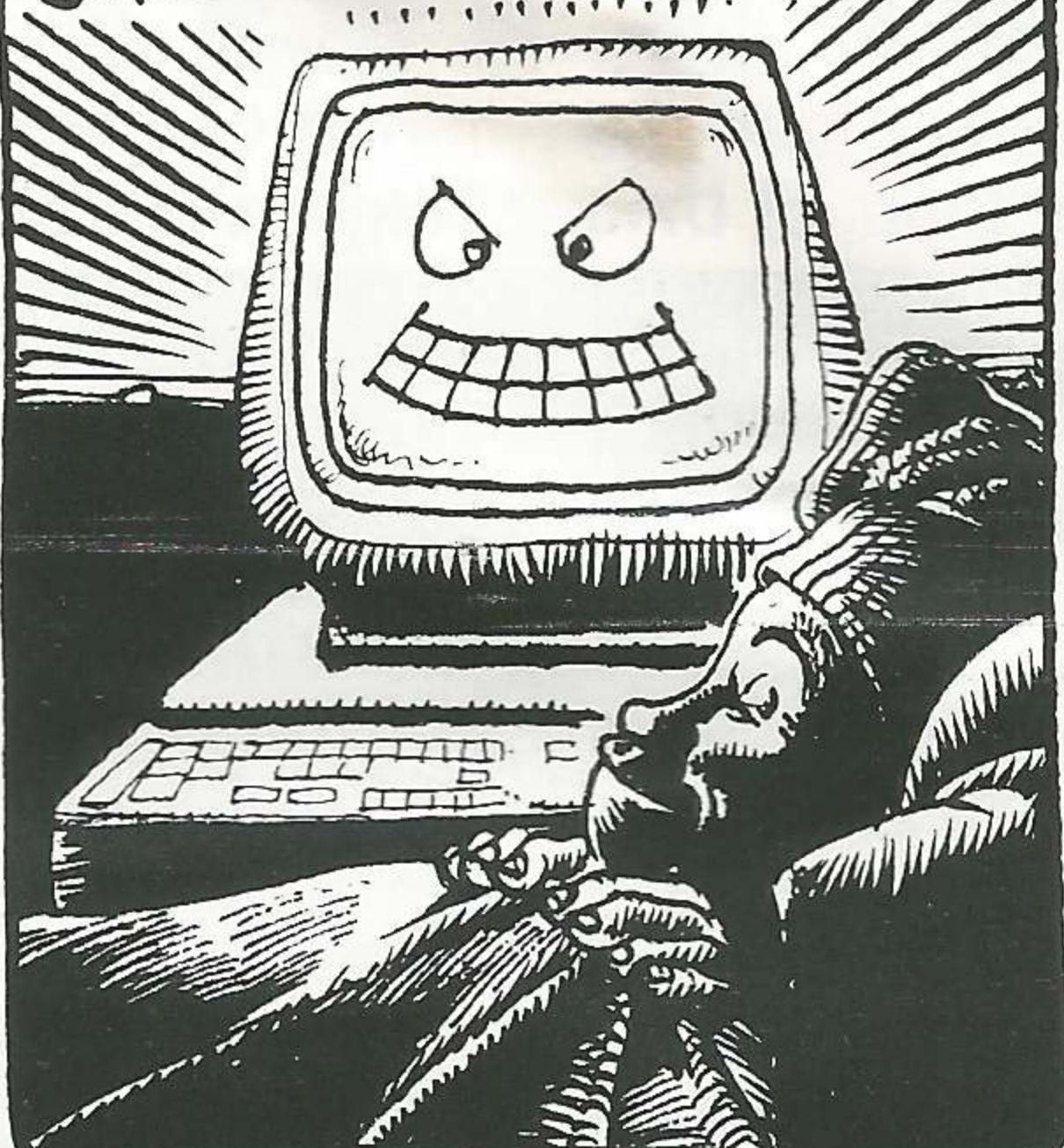
The Awesome, Mind-Bending Adventures of Jack in Black (TM) Episode Seventeen by Tsung-Dao Lee (a noted Chinese-American Physicist and Nobel Prize Winner, 1957)

JACK HAS JUST RETIRED
FOR THE EVENING AFTER A
LONG DAY PRACTISING HIS
SKILLS AT THE WONDERFUL
COMPUTER GAME,
'AURAL PURSUIT'*



* AVAILABLE IN THE FOYER.

BUT ALL IS NOT AS IT SEEMS... BECAUSE,
UNBEKNOWNST TO OUR SNOOZING
HERO, HIS TRUSTY HOME COMPUTER
IS REALLY AN **EVIL ENTITY** INTENT
UPON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
HUMAN RACE, AND, CIRCUITS
SLAVERING, IT DECIDES TO MAKE
JACK ITS FIRST CONQUEST...



BY TRANSMOGRIFYING
HIS BODY INTO A
**STREAM OF PULSATING
ELECTRONS** AND
TRANSPOSING HIM INTO
THE **MAINFRAME**
OF ITS COLD, **ELECTRIC
BRAIN!!**

SUDDENLY JACK FINDS HIMSELF AWAKE
IN AN **EERILY FAMILIAR** ELECTRONIC
WORLD, ATTEMPTING TO REDECORATE
A TARPULIN-DRAPE ROOM...

HM... IF I WASN'T POSITIVE THAT I
AM DREAMING, I COULD SWEAR
THAT I AM EXISTING IN A REAL
LIFE VERSION OF **AURAL
PURSUIT!** (Pat. Pending)



MIGHT AS WELL GO
ALONG WITH THIS, I
SUPPOSE... NOW, IN
ORDER TO ASCEND
TO THE **SECOND
LEVEL** I HAVE TO
FIND THIS **RINGING
TELEPHONE...**



HELLO? CBS?
YES, THIS IS **JACK**
IN **BLACK** HERE...
WHAT? I HAVE TO
TRAVEL ALL OVER THE
WORLD TO PICK UP
THE PAYMENTS FOR
TH' **STRANGLERS
TOUR?**



JACK TRAVELS TO ELECTRONIC
FACSIMILES OF NICE, NEW
YORK, STOCKHOLM, TOKYO,
BRISBANE AND CATFORD -
BUT HIS JOURNEY IS **FRAUGHT
WITH PERIL...**



IN NICE HE IS IMPRISONED

...AND IN **CATFORD** HE IS
FORCED TO SKIP UPON
MELTED CHEESE UNTIL
HE **HAEMORRHAGES.**



BUT... BEING SOMEWHAT EXPERT
AT THE GAME, THANKS TO **MANY
HOURS** OF PRACTICE, **JACK** SPEEDS
THROUGH THE LEVELS WITH FORMIDABLE
ALACRITY, AT EACH STOP PICKING
UP PIECES OF A **GIANT EAR** FOR
EXTRA POINTS.

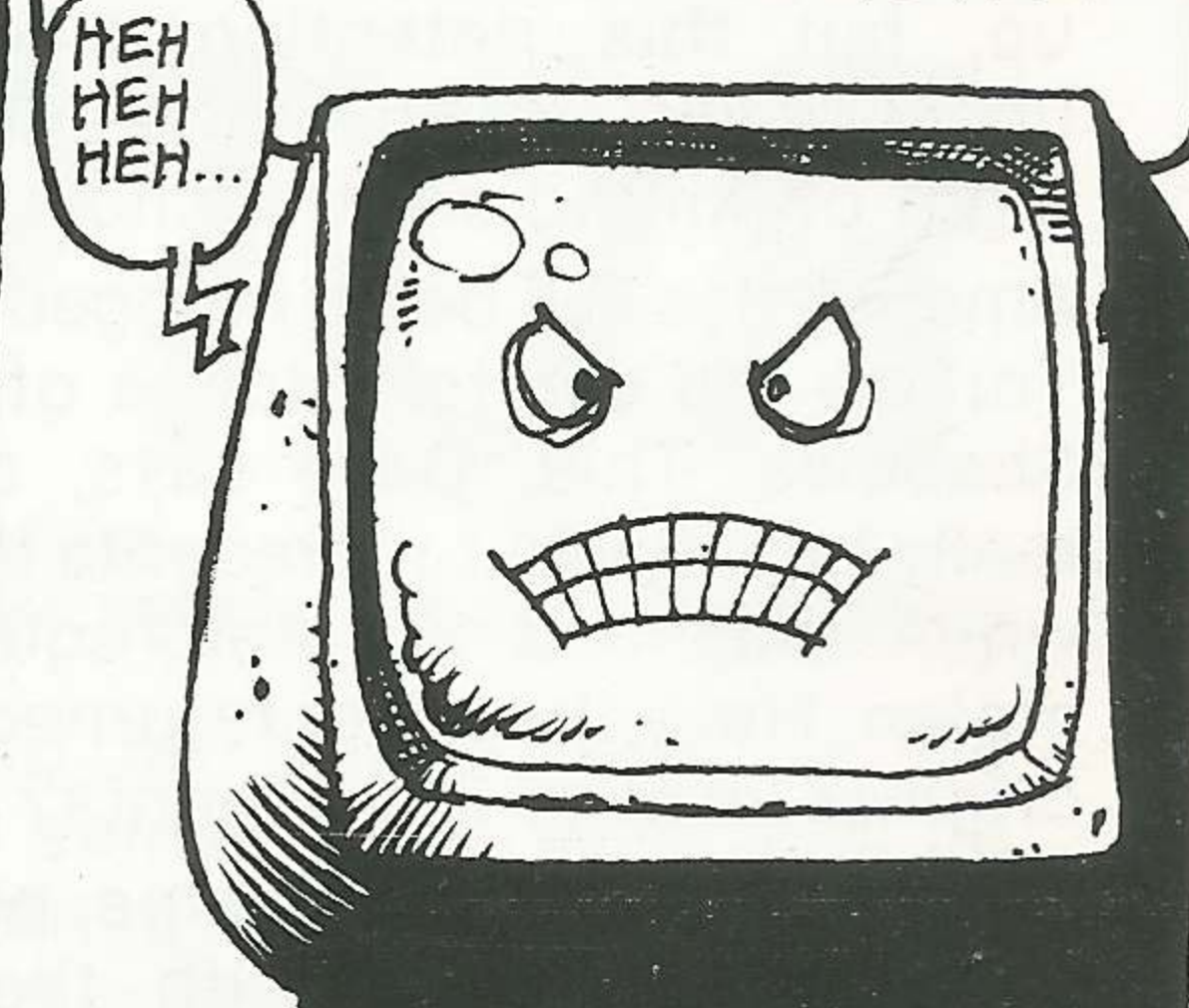


...UNTIL, AT LAST, THE
**AMPLITUDINOUS
AUDITORY
APPARATUS** IS
ASSEMBLED.



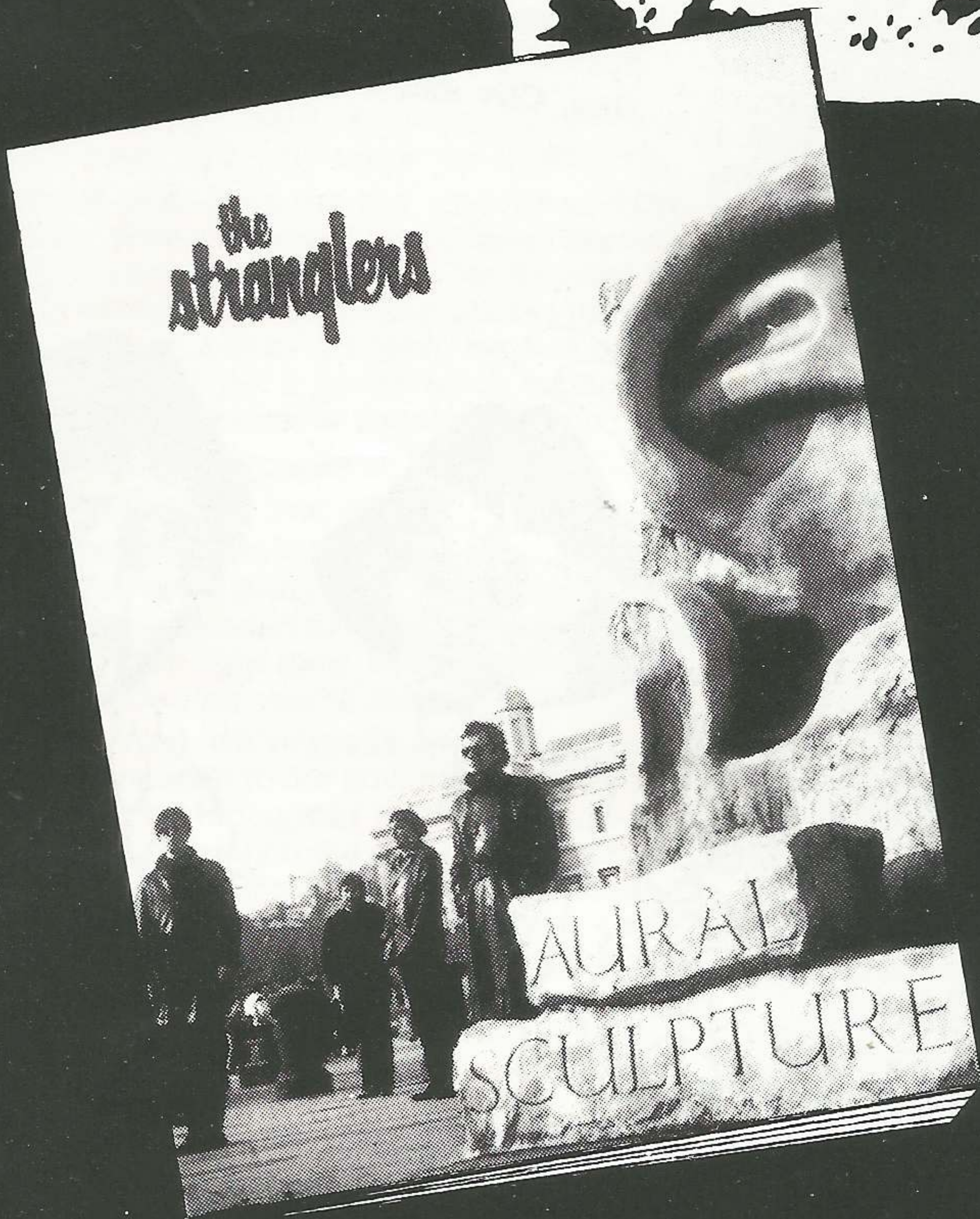
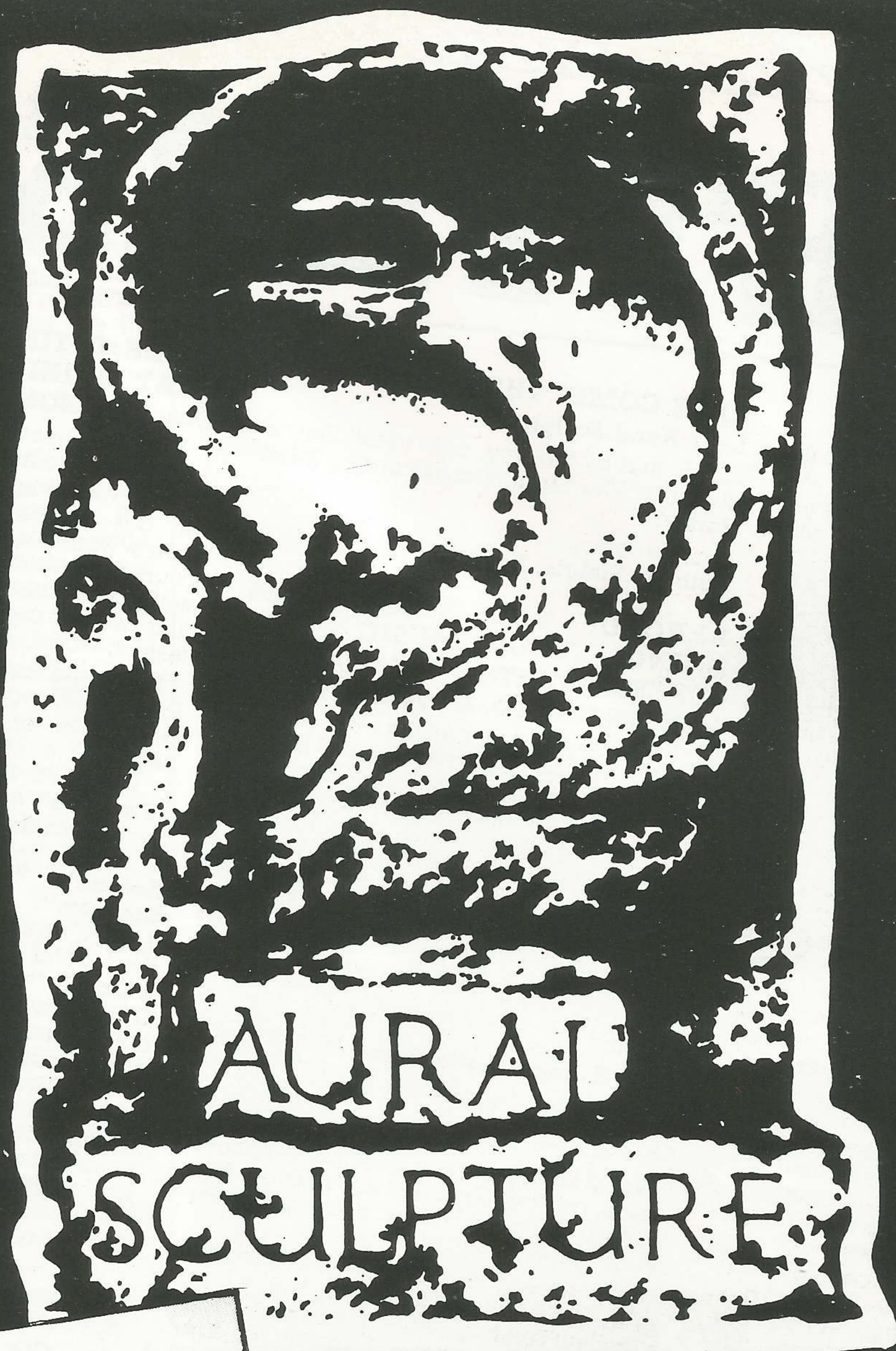
WHAT'S ALL
THIS EAR?

SO, **MR. BLACK...** YOU THINK
YOU HAVE **THWARTED** MY PLANS
FOR **WORLD DOMINATION...**
BUT YOU ARE STILL IN MY **POWER...**



CAN **JACK IN BLACK** ESCAPE THE
CLUTCHES OF THE **MECCANO
MACHIAVELLI?** WHO CARES?
BUT, TUNE IN NEXT TIME FOR **REP. 180f
JACK IN BLACK!**
(YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE).

Tsung-Dao Lee is available for
seminars on the falsity of the law
for the conservation of Parity. I thank you.



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LETTERS

AURAL SCULPTURE

Naturally, many of you have written in to us on the subject of the new album. Sorry we can't print all your letters, but here's a small selection, beginning with the view of the now legendary **Mark Oliff**

WE KNEW THAT IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Dear **STRANGLED** and **stranglers**

I went eagerly into my local record shop and grabbed a copy of the new album. What a brilliant cover — the best since **Black and White**. I was most excited about it and couldn't wait to get home and play it. When I got in I took the album out and studied the label, the lyrics and the back sleeve, gleaned information from it. I had previously heard **No Mercy** and **Let Me Down Easy** on the radio and liked them both. I put the record on my deck and was instantly taken by most of the tracks. **Aural Sculpture** it certainly is — with headphones on it's amazing! An excellent album. The horn sections on some tracks are great and they grab you, especially on **Ice Queen**. They make the album danceable. It makes you think — The Stranglers using a horn section! But it works and adds dimension to the music and enhances it. After all, the saxophone has been used on other Stranglers' albums. I found the guitar sound outstanding. It's so good, just like JJ's sneaky bass lines. It's very well produced, cleverly done and instantly listenable. Hugh's voice is so clear and strong — has he had singing lessons or has he just developed this style of singing over the years? Does JJ use foot pedals on the album and if so what kind?

There are five tracks I can't stop playing. **Punch and Judy** which is amazing, sounds like **Go Buddy**. The comical **Mad Hatter** is infectious with its hook lines. The bass and guitar on **No Mercy** are brilliant. **Let Me Down Easy**, which plods along, gets you tapping your foot about and **Ice Queen** — what can I say about that? The keyboards are back! It's a shame that there are probably about four or five albums being plugged by the media eg Frankie and Wham, which will stop it getting to No.1 in the album charts. Then again, who knows? What will be the next single? I beg you, get **No Mercy** out on vinyl! But don't take any more off the album, write some new stuff. I caught a couple of interviews with Hugh on the radio and he said that the album was the selection from thirty songs, so how about knocking out another album in early 85? Go for it! I've played the album loads of times now and if I'm away from it for long periods I get withdrawal symptoms. It's addictive and there isn't a track I don't like.

I know I have been critical of the band over the last few years but at least I've been constructive while doing so. They have always been the best around regardless of what I sometimes say. My views on a lot of things have changed and I have matured a bit (I'm twenty-one). Music is music after all and whatever they play, it is them. The worst things The Stranglers have done are better than a lot of groups' best things. I just lie back and let the music flow over me and enjoy it. Live for today and every success! All the best.

Mark Oliff, Brentwood.

HERE COMES THE MAD HATTER

Dear **Aural Sculptors**

....Oh, and by the way, didn't Matt Bianco object to The Stranglers recording **Mad Hatter**?

Yours in black
Anthony Stalgis, Leeds.

BEHOLD! THE STRANGLERS BRING YOU MUSIC FOR SUPERMARKETS

Dear **STRANGLED**, **Stranglers**, **SIS**

Correct me if I'm wrong, but was it not one of The Stranglers who stated that OMD produced good music for supermarkets? The product The Stranglers are currently putting out is just perfect for me to buy my baking beans and cornflakes to. Compared with Stranglers, if I heard OMD in the supermarket I'd pogo all the way to the check-out!

Pogo — obsolete movement of the body; this movement was often seen at a Stranglers' concert.

Cheers

Mark Arnold, Nottingham.

MIXED-UP KID

Dear **SIS**

Aural Sculpture — yet another excellent album, can't stop playing it! I think the first four tracks on side one would all make great singles.

Siouxsie and the Banshees have released a 12" EP called **The Thorn**, which is an excellent remix of earlier recordings. This gave me the idea — why don't The Stranglers release some remixes of earlier recordings? I think this would work well. I can just imagine a 12" extended remix version of **5 Minutes/Rok it to the Moon!**

Yours faithfully

Paulinblack, Colne, Lancs.

IS SHE TRYING TO GET OUT OF THAT BIKINI?

Dear **STRANGLED**

With the innovation of your new line in customized domestic items, ie. bath/beach towels, we thought you might be interested in our ideas for a new line in men's/women's beach wear. These, of course, would be in great demand — if nothing else because of their originality — and would probably take the summer fashion world of next year by storm.

Due to the many phallic implications to be found in Stranglers' titles, there are many possibilities for entertaining printing on this beach wear. For example:

1. Women's bikini bottoms could read: **"Paradise"** or **"Sometimes"** and on the back **"Peaches"**.
2. Bikini tops may read: **"Hanging Around"**, **"Oral Sculpture"** or **"Two Sunspots"**.
3. Men's trunks could be emblazoned with the legend: **"Do You Wanna..."** or **"Get a Grip"**, **"Go Buddy Go"** or **"Straighten Out"**. Amongst the less subtle titles in this sphere are: **"Euroman Cometh"** or **"Second Coming"**.
4. For the smurf-sized man in any female Stranglerphile's life there is always **"Ain't Nothing to it"**. And for those with social handicaps there could be a special issue with **"Crabs"** across their relevant parts, not to mention the see-through line with **"X-Cert"** upon it.

Alternatively you could just have a Stranglers' motif! What do others think of this idea?

Hag, Cliv and Eccle, Birmingham.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN BEAUMONT

BRASSED OFF!

Dear SIS

After the brilliant **Skin Deep** single, I was really excited about the prospect of the new album. But, having purchased **Aural Sculpture**, I was stunned into a virtual non-existence as a Stranglers' devotee. STRANGLED 19, however, transferred my disgust from the band themselves to this prat called Laurie Latham.

Apparently, from what I have read in number 19, he's the berk who's brought in these bleeding trumpets and violins and things. It strikes me that this could possibly be why the lads aren't considering touring this year (but I hope they do), the reason being that to do some of the new songs, it would mean carting around backing musicians — that isn't The Stranglers. That's more like ABC or somebody. Having discovered that an outside influence has messed up a still brilliant album I feel relieved.

I have now fully taken in the album and I like it very much, but I still shudder sometimes when I hear the trumpets. The tracks which have been tampered with would stand up on their own without the Glenn Miller influence (much as I like Glenn Miller).

I think Laurie should be hanged, for I feel he has led our band down a path which they will find hard to transfer to both live performances (if they wish to remain a 4-piece that is!) and to future material.

I gather that the lads had more than enough material before **Aural Sculpture** was made. I wonder if the material they left off was written with trumpets etc as part of the music? Or is it just Mr Latham who has put his thumb in it?

This is my opinion but I would like to know what other people think,
Best wishes

Rob Wakelin, Lichfield.

Of course, since Rob wrote this letter, tour dates have been announced and yes Rob, they are taking the brass section with them!

THE STAKES WERE GETTING HIGH

Dear SIS

....To have the same single released four times is pretty ridiculous but to gain only three new tracks (instrumentals are not counted because voices can be mixed out) is even worse. All these tracks would have fitted on one 12" single at a price of say £2.50, which, I guess, is acceptable these days. However, these four will cost in the region of £6.90 altogether, which is around £2.50 more than a current LP.

OK, so it will be a field day for collectors, of which I am one, but even I will be struggling to place a collector's desire above my views on these marketing ploys. I might add that these views apply to all artists and not only to The Stranglers, but they've unfortunately fallen into the same category.

Oh, so the buyers need only buy one version if they desire, but you at SIS know as well as I do that many fans will buy all four, and such marketing is taking advantage of those fans. They should know better than to buy all four but many will do so just the same. Well, has the situation finally arisen where The Stranglers have no selling control over marketing devices?

I'd like some kind of reply and dare I say it justification, but I haven't enclosed an SAE because I'll need all the extra cash I can get to buy the records!

All the best

Andrew Spencer, Tring.

A HEAD OF HIS TIME

Dear stranglers

Having just played **Aural Sculpture** for the umpteenth time I wonder what all the critics are talking about when they fault the album. I think it is one of your best — keep up the good work.

You may be pleased to know that all types enjoy your music. I am the headmaster of a primary school!

Yours

Bill Aston, Pershore, Worcs.

SPECTRUM BLUES

Dear SIS

...On another note, the lads' latest LP offering, **Aural Sculpture**, was certainly worth waiting for and so it should be after the long delay after **Feline!** The only let down from my point of view was the cassette version, which, supposedly as an extra track, has a computer game, **Aural Quest**. Fucking great if we've all got Sinclair Spectrum home computers. For those of us who haven't, tough shit!

Yours faithfully

D Freeman, Southampton.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD TOO

Dear SIS

In answer to your query in STRANGLED 19 as to who is the mysterious man in the photo with Ian Dury, I think I might know. I can't tell you his name or where he comes from, all I know is that he now lives in Bournemouth and is called "Strangler", as apparently his name lives up to his reputation. It has also been rumoured that he used to do some roadie work in the States for other bands such as Motorhead. He is definitely NOT Jet Black!

C M Graham-Way, Boscombe.

BETTER WATCH OUT FOR THE SKIN DEEP

To whichever poor sod opens this letter Ever since I was about thirteen or fourteen I've wanted to be a tattooist and this was also the time I discovered I liked The Stranglers' music. Now you've gone and brought out the single **Skin Deep**. I love the sleeve — it makes up for the bodge-up on **Collection**. The words "Skin Deep" on the cover don't look like tattoos though, and I've heard that Barry Louvaine is the only tattooist in Britain without a tattoo.

I've been to see a tattooist and he'll give me an apprenticeship for six months if I give him £1000. His reasons are that tattooists don't really want too many other tattooists around as business wouldn't be that wonderful and he doesn't need an assistant. If you feel like investing in a poor punk (although, of course, you were never really a punk band) please enclose a cheque for £1000. I'd be very grateful. The tattooist has told me that I'd probably make the money back within three months so it wouldn't take long to pay you back.

Luv.

Caryanne Priddle, Romford.

RAIN & DOLE & TEA

Dear STRANGLED/SIS

Sorry I can't renew my subscription to STRANGLED — I would if I could. I can't because I'm an evil militant striking miner. I receive no money from the DHSS (SS for short) or the NUM (Arthur rools OK) and haven't been paid for nine months. Keep a JJ record or two back for us striking miners.

Yours bruised but not beaten

A Spencer, Peterlee.

ORAL QUEST

Dear All

Having bought the excellent 12" version of **Skin Deep** with the superb **Vladimir and the Beast** on the flip-side, I went into my record shop with high hopes for the **Aural Sculpture** LP.

The first question I found myself asking, on listening to **Aural Sculpture**, was, "What the hell is the point to it?" I believe the idea behind this album must be to make the music as simple as possible in the hope that the lyrics will receive greater attention than previously. If this is so then The Stranglers are going about it the wrong way, since, apart from **Skin Deep**, the excellent **North Winds Blowing** and **No Mercy**, its meaning is largely lost. The poor victim listening to it shuts off his ears because, for the most part, the album is banal, clichéd and merely "skin deep". I do admire The Stranglers for trying to progress but I feel that they should try to progress forward, not backwards as at present. If they continue to make music (?) like this then I am not surprised that life shows them no mercy.

Good luck in the future

Adam Smith, Bath.

LIFE SHOWS NO MERCY

Dear Stranglers

Just thought I would let you know that I think **Aural Sculpture** is a very good album. Also I have just bought the (Cement Mix) **No Mercy** single which I think is brilliant, but I must say I like **In One Door** a lot better. The lyrics to this particular track are excellent and just reflect how I feel at the moment. I really like the new album, but it took me longer to "get into it" than **Feline** which is my favourite of all The Stranglers' albums.

My days are spent listening to your records and also playing chess with my three computers in my room. For a combination of reasons I have been in a psychiatric unit in a big hospital here in Leeds, and they turned my original fears and anxieties into the twin monsters of hypochondria and hysteria. Then, as if that was enough, they got me dependent on various drugs, which have just added to my complex neurosis which I am now left with. (I am at present on LITHIUM and PRO-CYCLADENE tablets with an injection of DEPIXOL every four weeks as well.) It is a complex problem that I am suffering from and I don't see a solution this side of the grave. I just feel as though I want to be **Let Down Easy** so to speak.

Keep on producing excellent and original LPs and singles. I get more encouragement from your records than my "pill-pushing" psychiatrist who is about as understanding as a dead Mastodon.

Best wishes and good luck

Stuart Howieson, Leeds.



PUZZLE PAGE

THIS ISSUE'S PUZZLE WAS SENT TO US BY IAN HAYLOR OF WELWYN IN HERTFORDSHIRE. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TO FIT THE STRANGLERS' SONG-TITLES BELOW INTO THE GRID. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT! THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE A SWEATSHIRT OF HIS/HER CHOICE. FOR THE ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLE IN STRANGLED NO. 19 SEE PAGE 31.

50 By The Stranglers IV

4 LETTERS

GRIP
TANK
TITS
UGLY

5 LETTERS

PIN UP
TRAMP

6 LETTERS

CURFEW
LOVE 30
SWEDEN

7 LETTERS

DUCHESS
LA FOLIE
PAWSHER
PEACHES

8 LETTERS

BEARCAGE
BITCHING
PARADISE
THE RAVEN
WALKON BY
5 MINUTES

9 LETTERS

OLD CODGER
SCHOOL MAM
SOMETIMES
TOP SECRET

10 LETTERS

BLUE SISTER
DEAD RINGER
DO YOU WANNA
LONDON LADY
MAN IN WHITE
MEN IN BLACK
THROWN AWAY

11 LETTERS

CRUEL GARDEN
NICE 'N' SLEAZY
GOLDEN BROWN
TWO SUNSPOTS

12 LETTERS

CHOOSEY SUSIE
DAGENHAM DAVE
ENGLISH TOWNS
FOUR HORSE MEN
IN THE SHADOWS
NO MORE HEROES
OUTSIDE TOKYO
VIETNAMERICA
WALTZ IN BLACK

13 LETTERS

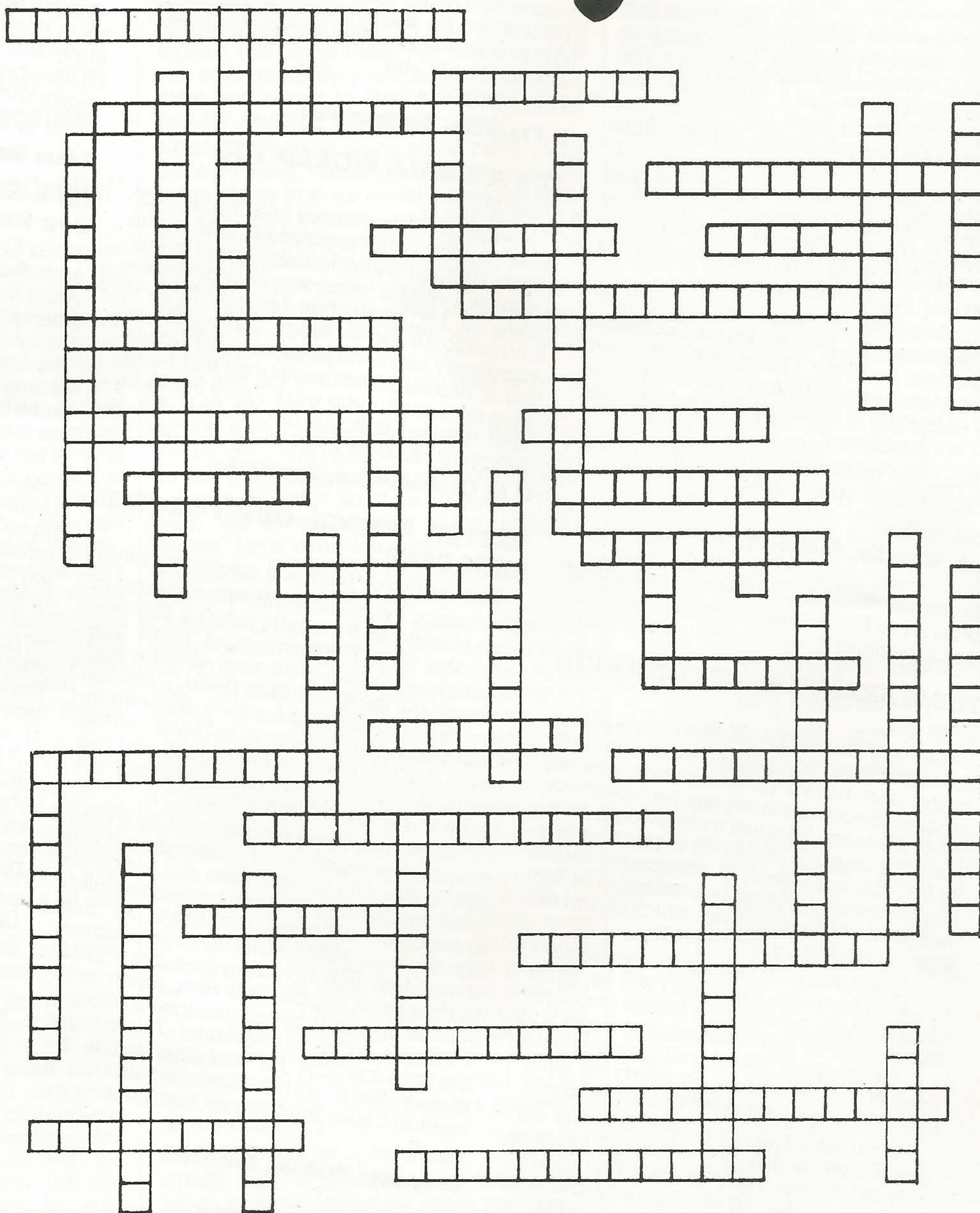
HANGING AROUND
I FEEL LIKE A WOG
STRAIGHTEN OUT

14 LETTERS

DOWN IN THE SEWER
ROK IT TO THE MOON
TOILER ON THE SEA

15 LETTERS

GOODBYE TOULOUSE



DISCOGRAPHY

Title	Catalogue Number	Label	Year of Release
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ALBUMS

Rattus Norvegicus	UAG 30045	U.A.	1977
No More Heroes	UAG 30200	U.A.	1977
Black and White	UAK 30222	U.A.	1978
Live X-Cert	UAG 30224	U.A.	1979
The Raven	UAG 30262	U.A.	1979
The Meninblack	LBG 30313	Liberty	1981
La Folie	LBG 30342	Liberty	1981
The Collection	LBG 30353	Liberty	1982
Feline	EPIC 25237	Epic	1983
Aural Sculpture	EPC 26220	Epic	1984

SINGLES

Grip/London Lady	UP 36211	U.A.	1977
Peaches/Go Buddy Go	UP 36248	U.A.	1977
Something Better Change/Straighten Out	UP 36277	U.A.	1977
No More Heroes/In the Shadows	UP 36300	U.A.	1977
5 Minutes/Rok it to the Moon	UP 36350	U.A.	1978
Nice 'n Sleazy/Shut Up	UP 36379	U.A.	1978
Walk on By/Old Codger/Tank	UP 36429	U.A.	1978
Duchess/Fools Rush Out	BP 308	U.A.	1979
Nuclear Device/Yellowcake UF6	BP 318	U.A.	1979
Bear Cage/Shah Shah a Go Go	BP 344	U.A.	1980
12" version	12-BP 344	U.A.	1980
Who Wants the World/The Meninblack	BPX 355	U.A.	1980
Tomorrow Was/Nubiles (cocktail version)	SIS 001	SIS	1980
Thrown Away/Top Secret	BP 383	Liberty	1981
Just Like Nothing on Earth/Maninwhite	BP 393	Liberty	1981
Let Me Introduce You to the Family/Vietnamerica	BP 405	Liberty	1981
Golden Brown/Love 30	BP 407	Liberty	1981
La Folie/Waltz in Black	BP 410	Liberty	1982
Strange Little Girl/Cruel Garden	BP 412	Liberty	1982
European Female/Savage Breast	EPCA 2893	Epic	1982
Pic-disc version	EPCA 11 2893	Epic	1983
Midnight Summer Dream/Vladimir & Olga	EPCA 3167	Epic	1983
12" version	EPCA 13 3167	Epic	1983
Paradise/Pawsher	EPCA 3387	Epic	1983
Paradise/Pawsher/Permission 12" version	EPC TA 3387	Epic	1983
Golden Brown/Strange Little Girl	G456	Liberty	1984
Skin Deep/Here & There	EPCA 4738	Epic	1984
Skin Deep/Here & There/Vladimir & The Beast Part III			
12" version	EPC TA 4738	Epic	1984
No Mercy/In One Door	EPCA 4921	Epic	1984
No Mercy/In One Door (ear shaped disc)	EPC WA 4921	Epic	1984
No Mercy/In One Door/Hot Club (instrumental)			
12" version	EPC TA 4921	Epic	1984
Let Me Down Easy/Achilles Heel	EPCA 6045	Epic	1985
12" Version	EPC TA 6045	Epic	1985

E.P.

Don't Bring Harry/Wired/Crabs/In the Shadows	STR 1	U.A.	1979
No Mercy/In One Door/Hot Club/Head On The Line	EPC GA 4921	Epic	1985

FREE SINGLES - limited

Choosey Susie/Peasant in the Big Shitty (free with Rattus album)	FREE 3	U.A.	1977
Walk on By/Tits/Mean to Me (free with B & W album)	FREE 9	U.A.	1978
Aural Sculpture (free with Feline album)	XPS 167	Epic	1983

SOLO RECORDINGS

JJ BURNEL			
Euroman Cometh (album)	UA G30214	U.A.	1979
Freddie Laker/Ozymandias (single)	UP 36500	U.A.	1979
HUGH CORNWELL (WITH ROBERT WILLIAMS)			
Nosferatu (album)	UAG 30251	U.A.	1979
White Room/Losers in a Lost Land (single)	BP 320	U.A.	1979
DAVE GREENFIELD & JJ BURNEL			
Fire and Water (album)	EPC 25707	Epic	1983
Rain & Dole & Tea/Consequences (single)	EPCA 4076	Epic	1984

FOR SALE Stranglers' singles, albums and 12"s. Phone John 0442 63748. After 5.30 pm

WANTED Peaches radioplay, Snow Country, Golden Brown mispress, Buzzcocks/Peaches mispress, Nubiles misprint (realistic prices paid!), Bear Cage 12" pic cover, G Brown white and brown cover, Family hearts cover and any interview tapes. For sale or swap — pink EP, white EP, Something Better Change (same label both sides), A & M Black and White colourwax promo LP, Peaches German. Geoff, 15 Brabant Rd, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 7AU.

FOR SWAP OR SALE Dutch versions Mony Mony (rare), Something Better Change, La Folie, Skin Deep. Rene Castelijns, Petrus dondersstraat 17A, Roosendaal, Holland 4703 HN.

WANTED Damned — Stretcher Case 7", Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde 7" import. Reasonable offers please. David Martin, Bunkerhill, Abbotsford Rd, North Berwick, E Lothian, Scotland. Hello to Wellie, Graeme, Bob and Unknown Pleasures.

FOR SALE Massive collection of Stranglers' records including many rarities, demos, imports, white-label promos, mis-pressings, acetates, test-pressings etc etc. 7", 12" and LPs. Send for list to: Roy Smith, 127 Riverdale Rd, Erith, Kent DA8 1PY.

FOR SALE Stranglers IV (import) £8, Collection (black cover — import) £6, Who Wants the World/Bear Cage 12" (Jap) £5, European Female/Savage Breast 7" (Jap) £2. All played only once. Darren Hewitt, 2 Medway Walk, Norley Hall Est, Pemberton, Wigan, Lancs WN5 9NQ.

KILLING JOKE ITEMS WANTED Anything — rarities, posters, fellow Jokers to converse with. For sale or swap — Nervous System 7" promo £6, Rain and Dole and Tea promo £5, Dutch Mony Mony (pic very rare) £18, Rattus promo W/L £40, Siouxsie Hong Kong US promo £7. Wanted Cure early singles, Cult Heroes 7"s, tapes etc. Mark Blenkins, the White Hart, Market Place Spalding, Lincs PE11 1SU.

FOR SALE Stranglers and Jam scrapbooks and posters. Wanted — Elvis Costello records etc. M Mc Mullen, 38 Worcester St, Brynmawr, Gwent, S Wales.

VIKKI, I love you, even though you like the Style Council — love Ter-in-black.

FOR SALE Feline tour T-shirt, M, £2, PIL black tour T-shirt, L, £2, Spear of Destiny T-shirt, L, £2, Rising Sun T-shirt, L, £2. Ex cond, p & p incl. **WANTED** STRANGLED Vol 1: 1-9, Vol 2: 2 & 5 originals/photocopies. Also Siouxsie mags Phase 1 and 2. Send SAE. I Addison, 4 Trent Close, Burnwood, Nr Walsall, W Midlands WS7 9JH.

WANTED Euroman, E.Female, JLNOE, Bear Cage, 5 Mins pic discs in good condition. Please include P & P in prices. C Hulme, 11 Weymouth Rd, Winton, Eccles, Manchester M30 8WJ.

FOR SALE Jap X-Cert, US Stranglers IV, Hope and Anchor Double, Euroman, 12" Bear Cage, most singles and EPs including rarities, STRANGLED Vol 2 only. Also cuttings and interviews 78-82 and other Siouxsie, PIL, Furs records. Send SAE. Des Thompson, 12 Victoria Rd, Liverpool L13 8AW.

FOR SALE Various punk and Stranglers' rarities. Will swap for PIL rarities. Full details: Jim, Gloucester 862421 (5.15 - 6.30 pm).

FOR SALE Rare Hope and Anchor double album (mint) £10 and other tapes, records, merchandise etc.

WANTED — anything on Stranglers to buy/swap. Andy Bassil, 163 Balmoral Rd, Watford, Herts WD2 4HA (Watford 45776).

WANTED Either Great Lost Stranglers Album or Great Lost Continued. Any price paid within reason. Sue Davis, 363 St. Peters Rd, Manadon, Plymouth, Devon PL5 3DR (0752 701087).

AMAZING STRANGLERS' COLLECTION FOR SALE including many rarities eg Greek Collection, Yugoslavian La Folie, Freddie Laker, 3D Raven and MANY MORE. Send SAE for full details. N Wood, Skelwith Bridge Hotel, Nr Ambleside, Cumbria. **ALSO FOR SALE** early punk singles.

FOR SALE/SWAP White EP, 2 copies Grip (1 pic), Something Better Change, Peaches, Mony Mony (Liberty label), Motorhead Iron Fist LP, Clash Out of Control T-shirt, black as new. **WANTED** Damned singles. Jon James, 30 Kings Hill, Great Gornard, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0EH.

WILL THE GUY FROM PLYMOUTH who phoned about a JJ Euroman display please phone/write. Neil Harris, 20 Glenesk Rd, Great Sutton, South Wirral L66 4NG (051 339 3576).

FOR SALE Celia — You Better Believe Me £5.50, Hugh Cornwell — White Room £1.50, Bear Cage 12" £3. Ex cond. No pic covers. Jerry, 8, Cadland Park, Holbury, Southampton SO4 1PE (0703 899302).

MULLY AND ALISTAIR, how's Belfast? They're all wooden ones here! See you on your side soon! Andy.

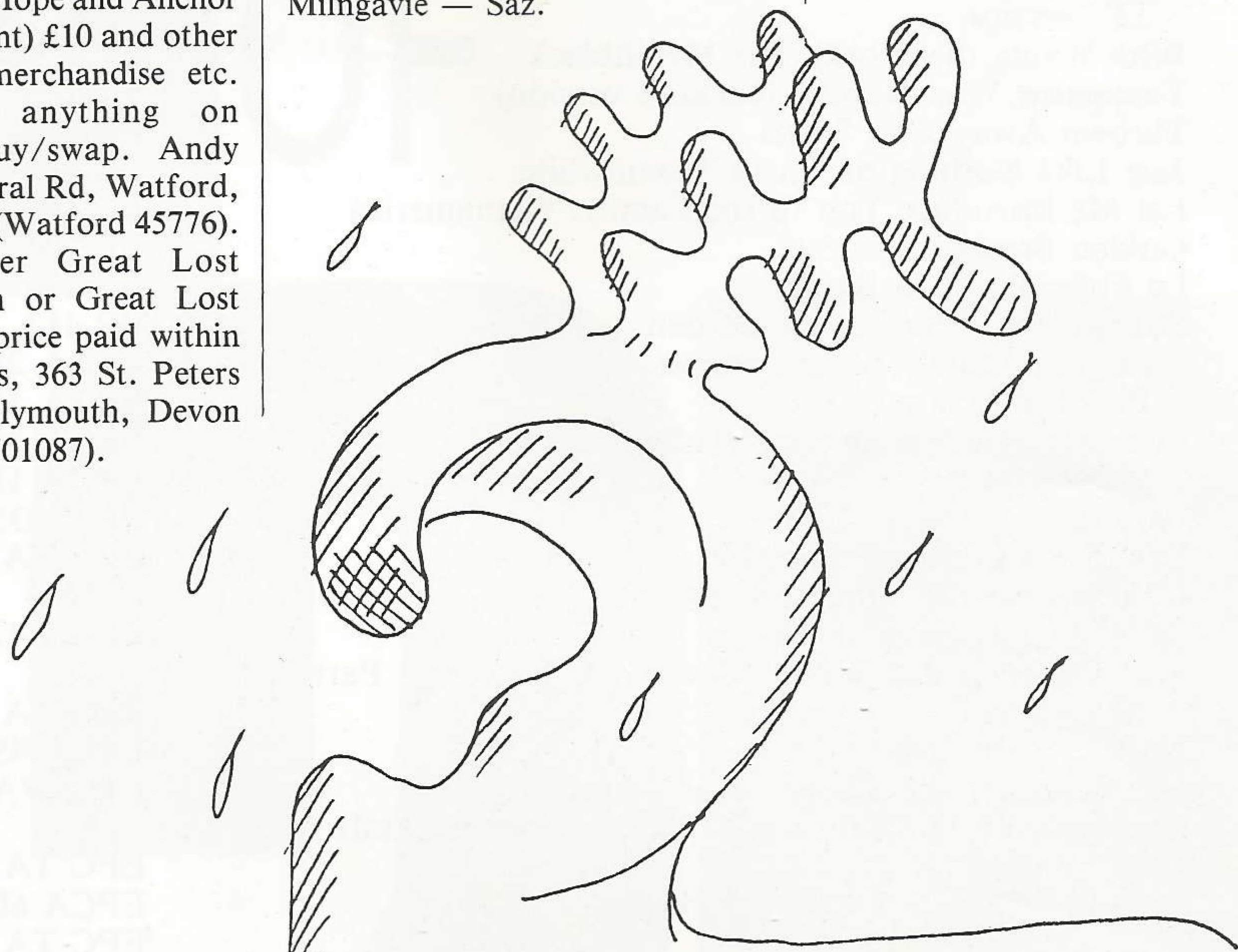
MA CHÈRE SAMANTHA, je t'adore — Ian (Ce n'est pas la folie). I'M never gonna give you up 'cos you're pure cool — Colin-in-black.. **HELLO** to Paul & Jeff Kearns in Milngavie — Saz.

TONY MC HUGH in Intensive Care, Bradford Hospital — get well soon. Also hello to Ian (Falmouth), Karen (Chadderton) and will N C Palmer-in-black and John McGeever in the Big Country T-shirt please PISS OFF. Ian (Chadderton).

LEP (SHAUN KENNEDY?) AND VIKKI FROM LEIGH who were at Cap D'Agde in August please contact John. He's lost your address and the tapes are ready. Also any MIB/WIB who can play drums/guitar/keyboards and want to start a group — Tameside area. Influences — NMA, Chameleons, Hanoi Rocks, Ramones. John Hallworth, 31 Victoria St, Denton, Manchester (061 336 4451) PS anyone else can write too!

WANTED Any Volume 1 STRANGLEDs. Good photocopies will do. Give price. Grant Curley, 98 Birch Ave, Chadderton. Oldham, Lancs OL1 2QY.

HI, Karen-in-black. Remember me coz I'll always remember you. Love Ya. M-in-black.



RUDOLF THE RED NOSED RAINDEAR

DANCE TO THE BEST ALTERNATIVE SOUNDS 77-84 at Screwdrivers, Electric Blue, Clifftown Rd, Southend on Friday nights 8 pm — 2 am. Admission £1.

HELEN — C, Devon. U2 are not bad, honest! But "THE MEN" are in a class of their own. Don't you agree??? Paulinblack, Glasgow.

20-YEAR-OLD LONDON LADY wants to write to and meet other Stranglers fans. Photos please, all letters answered. Nicky in Black, 3 Farm Lane, Shirley, Croydon, Surrey CR0 8AQ. Go on, what have you got Toulouse?

WANTED Cuttings Jan 77-Dec 77. Phone 0207 506272. Paul.

Cartoons: John King

SMALL ADS

FOR SALE BUMPER record collection — groups too numerous to mention! Send SAE for details. John Phillips, 19 Biddesden House, Cadogan Street, Chelsea, London SW3.

WANTED Vocalist, male/female for home recording project. Technical ability unimportant, but sincere attitude required. Influences — Stranglers, Jarre, T.D., baroque music, harpsichords, Patrick McGoohan, UFOs and sixties' spy themes. Aim — to approach independent labels. David Whelan 5 Worthington Ave, Heywood, Nr Manchester, Lancs.

KEYBOARD PLAYER WANTED Derby area only, for EVIL BAND. Influences — Skeletor, The Fall. Andy, 11 Peartree Ave, Newhall, Burton-on-Trent DE11 0LZ (214515).

FEMALE STRANGLERS FAN Would like lads 19-22 to write to, preferably from the Birmingham and Tyneside area. Photo appreciated. Tasmin Warran, Flat 7, Avon House, Busheyfields Rd, Dudley, W Midlands DY1 2LT.

WANTED JLNOE, French Harry, Mony Mony, Anti-Nowhere League — So What (7"). All in pic and good condition. Phone Dan 021 777 1055.

TO TIM All my love, Lianne XXX. **FREE TO GOOD HOME** Stranglers' articles till 1983 and loads of posters. Also medium black leather bike jacket (never worn). Send address if you want any/both. Sue Stirling, 264A Warwick Rd, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1LJ.

SALE OR SWAP Mint/vgc pic covers Stranglers for Costello rarities. P Holsted, 59 Queenswood Ave, Wallington, Surrey SM6 8HR.

FOR SALE OR SWAP copies of STRANGLED Vol 1, except nos 5 & 9 which are WANTED. Gary Holmes, 37 Old Manor Road, Rustington, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN16 3QS.

WANTED Anything on the Stranglers. Reasonable prices to: Bones, The Burrows, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 8JP. Cath Cockburn — fondish adieu (The Present).

WANTED STRANGLED Vol 2 nos 2,3,5,7,11, & 13 plus any Vol 1. Also Euroman, Nosferatu, any album promo posters, cuttings, ads etc. Your price paid within reason. Would any fans in Ireland like to write to a 17-year-old Man-in-Black? Mick-in-Black, 102 Cypress Grove Rd, Templeogue, Dublin 6, Ireland. (903825).

WANTED Photos/live shots of the Stranglers. Buy/swap for Stranglers' rarities. Nick Hampson, 22 Valley Rd, Streatham, London SW16 2XN.

WANTED Grip, Thrown Away, La Folie singles. Also Joy Division's Ideal for Living (7" or 12") and Earcom 2 Contradiction 12" compilation EP. Tony, 15 Chadderton Fold, Chadderton, Oldham OL1 2RR. Any price paid, within reason.

JOHN AND ANDREW IN BLACK Hope to hear from and see you soon! Liz and Mags in black, Glasgow.

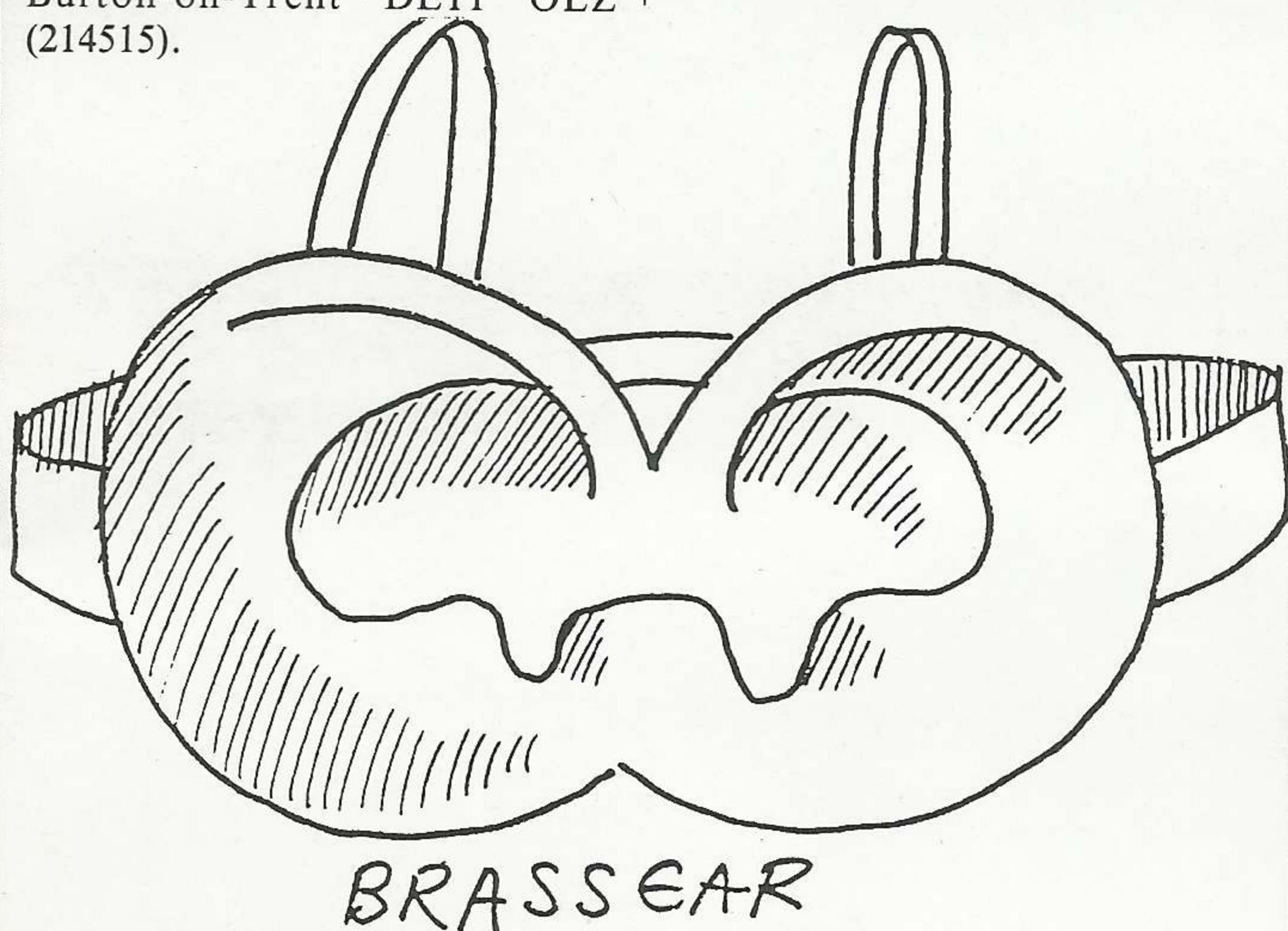
PAUL, BRIAN, FEZ — The wind blows on heading North and strong. Death is death and blood is just a tear. The Creepshow beat Fu Manchu — no criminal damage. Soak in the spirit of trees and sup up that pint. The pendulum swings as I shiver in the morning dew, and the baby cries fill my belly whilst its mother weeps for the gift of milk. The Aardvark's heart is smiling, he's loving life once more.

WANTED Mutant Rock — Meteors (pic), The Crusher — Cramps (pic), 5 Minutes pic cover only. Also Cramps, Meteors cuttings, badges, tapes and rarities. Your price paid within reason. 1 Deroran Place, Stirling, Scotland FK8 2 PG.

FOR SALE White EP £3, US EP (free with Stranglers IV) £4, Devo Freedom LP £2. **WANTED** Bear Cage 12" pic, Golden Brown 12" pic (German), interview pic discs. Duncan, The Hawthorns, Startley, Nr Chippenham, Wilts. (Seagry 720535).

WANTED STRANGLED Vol 1 plus Vol 2 nos 2,5,7, & 13. Originals or photocopies. Will pay your price. P Gilliland, 160 Scott Rd, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands.

All small ads are placed free, but as we can't check them out, you reply at your own risk!



The winner of the puzzle in STRANGLED 19 was Rory Coward of Shifnal in Shropshire.

The correct answers were as follows:

- A Two going with sea — West (5) and Southern (13)
- B Astronauts use this lamp — Burning (35) and Midnight (29)
- C He spent seven of these in a brothel — Days (22) and Nights (30)
- D Two going with men — Brisbane (32) and Inblack (34)
- E Two going with Paris — France (9) and London (28)
- F Two that are strange — Honeymoon (12) and Little Girl (21)
- G A thousand... — Years (14) and Harsh Words (25)
- H Two that go it alone — Companies (2) and Tympanis (19)

- I British cities — English (36) and Towns (8)
 - J Education, Missus! — School (1) and Mam (17)
 - K Two that are dead — Los Angeles (23) and Ringer (31)
 - L Twice arrived — Second (33) and Coming (26)
 - M A double dose of acne — Two (20) and Sunspots (27)
 - N Harvey Smith quadrupled — Four (16) and Horsemen (4)
 - O See you, Lautrec — Goodbye (37) and Toulouse (6)
 - P Death at the gallows — Hanging (15) and Around (24)
 - Q Somewhere, someone — Outside (18) and Tokyo (11)
 - R Two going with cruel — Seas (3) and Garden (7)
- That leaves one word — number 10: ICE.

SMALL ADS

